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Mary the Mother

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MARY THE MOTHER

HER LIFE AND CATHOLIC DEVOTION TO HER

By

BLANCHE MARY KELLY, Litt.D.

WITH FOREWORD BY REV. JOHN J. WYNNE, S. J.

*Not because thou art Blessed,
not on this account is the Fruit of
thy womb Blessed; but because He
has prevented thee with the blessings
of sweetness, on this account art
thou Blessed.*

—St. Bernard.



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ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK

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THE ENCYCLOPEDIA PRESS, INC.

NEW YORK

TO THE SON OF MARY
THIS BOOK
IN HIS MOTHER'S HONOR

of pub. Weekly. May 15. 1920.

MARY

Mary the Dawn,
Christ the Perfect Day.
Mary the Gate,
Christ the Heavenly Way.
Mary the Root,
Christ the Mystic Vine.
Mary the Grape,
Christ the Sacred Wine.
Mary the Wheat-Sheaf,
Christ the Living Bread.
Mary the Rose-tree,
Christ the Rose blood-red.
Mary the Fount,
Christ the Cleansing Flood.
Mary the Chalice,
Christ the Saving Blood.
Mary the Temple,
Christ the Temple's Lord.
Mary the Shrine,
Christ the God adored.
Mary the Beacon,
Christ the Haven's Rest.
Mary the Mirror.
Christ the Vision Blest.
Mary the Mother,
Christ the Mother's Son.
Both ever blest while endless ages run!

Author Unknown

FOREWORD

A new book on the Virgin Mother of God is always in order. It is part fulfilment of her own prophecy: All generations shall call me blessed. From every generation past each new generation has taken up the angelic greeting, Hail, Full of Grace, endeavoring to express some measure of that fullness, adding always to what has been said before but never exhausting the possibility of praise which is to resound for all generations.

This book aims at showing how the office and dignity of Mary become clearer as the world goes on; how devotion to her increases; how new titles are bestowed upon her; how her shrines grow in number and in stateliness; how art, music, painting, sculpture, literature, engage ear and eye with the vision of her queenly graces; how by her part in divine worship heaven comes down to us on earth.

For the first time in many centuries no one dare speak ill of the Mother of God and of mankind. Some may deny the great prerogatives

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revealed in her by the sacred text; but none now dispute her pre-eminence among women, her holy ideals for men. Descendants from ancestors who esteemed it a service to God to break her images and profane her shrines now look upon her gun-shattered statues with affliction, and place her images at the cross-roads.

True Mother of our race regenerated in grace by her divine Son, Mary has more than once saved the world from disorders far worse than now threaten it. She has protected the civilization which had its source in Christ from destructive invasion from without, from demoralization from within. As we derive so much from her motherly care, it is but right that we should know at least in outline the story of her greatness, holiness, and power, and for one source of this knowledge we are indebted to the charming narrative of "Mary the Mother."

JOHN J. WYNNE, S. J.

New York, 1919.

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MARY THE MOTHER

PART I

HER LIFE

*Thou art made beauteous and
sweet in thy delights, O Holy
Mother of God!*

All the details of a mother's life are matters of deep interest to her children, and they listen eagerly to those who can remember various aspects of her childhood and young girlhood. This same desire has always been manifested by Catholics with regard to Mary, the Mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who in virtue of her Divine maternity became the Mother of us all.

Our knowledge of her life is derived chiefly from the Gospels, and supplemented by details handed down by the piety of the faithful from the first ages of the Church and called tradition. When we have put together everything that Scripture and reliable tradition tell us it may seem that they have told us very little concerning her of whom we would gladly know so much.

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But as a matter of fact they tell us a great deal, for from each circumstance that they relate we are able to gather facts great and wonderful. For this reason the events of Mary's life are called mysteries, for back of what is apparent to the eye lie a host of sacred and sublime truths, many of which we should not conceive of as possible unless they had been revealed to us by God.

The Gospels tell us nothing concerning her childhood. For this knowledge we have to rely on the tradition which relates that she was the only child of a devout Jewish couple named Joachim and Anna, given to them in their advanced age as the fruit of prayer.

Joachim is said to have been a descendant of David, who was called from the sheep-folds of Bethlehem to reign first over Juda and later over all Israel. Anna is considered to have come of the priestly family of Aaron. It seems probable that they were living at Jerusalem when their child was born.

From the first instant of her conception in the womb of her mother this child was preserved free from the stain of original sin. This stain and its punishment have been inherited by every other descendant of Adam. It was to free them from

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this, as well as from sins committed by themselves, that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity made Himself Man, that by taking on Himself their offences and transgressions, He might pay by His sufferings and death the sum of their debt to God's offended justice. God offended could only be satisfied by God atoning.

But it was not fitting that she who was to be His mother, she who was to be the tabernacle of the All-Holy, of whom He was to assume His sacred Body, should ever, even for an instant, be in the power of sin, His enemy. That Mary should be conceived wholly stainless it was only necessary that Her Son, who was the Son of God, should will it, and she owed the privilege to the fact that He did so will to sanctify His Mother. It was not merited for her by the sanctity of her parents nor by her own great holiness. It was earned for her by the merits of her Son. This singular privilege is called her Immaculate Conception.

Joachim and Anna called their infant daughter Mary, the Hebrew form of which is *Miriam*, a name to which several meanings have been given, the most probable of which seems to be *beautiful* or *perfect one*. Whatever its meaning it has

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come to have a sacredness of import second only to the Divine Name itself. It is surrounded with such a halo of love and veneration that even many who are not Catholics have acknowledged its singular charm. It was a Protestant poet who wrote of it that

“ She to whom it once was given
Was half of earth and half of heaven.”

When she was scarcely past infancy Mary is said to have been presented by her parents to God in the Temple, where she was educated with other children of her age. God was wont to prepare His prophets for their exalted mission by leading them into desert places in whose silence He could speak to their souls, and for His own work upon earth He made ready by thirty years of retirement, with forty days of unbroken silence as the immediate preparation. It is therefore not difficult to realize what great things He must have wrought in Mary's soul in these years of sublime and sacred seclusion during which He prepared her for the greatest thing of all.

Neither is it difficult to imagine with what dignity this sinless daughter of Israel must have moved about the hallowed place, which inasmuch as it was the place in which God had visibly mani-

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fested His Presence, was a shadow and figure of herself; with what eagerness and wonder she must have pondered over the great Promise God had made to her people and with what passionate longing she must have besought Him for its fulfilment: “Send forth, O Lord, the lamb, the ruler of the earth, from Petra of the desert, to the mount of the daughter of Sion.”

For there was a Promise. Immediately upon Adam’s sin God had given it, in the very breath with which He cursed the serpent who had tempted Adam to that sin. He promised that he would one day send a Woman who would crush the serpent’s head through the enmity that should exist between her offspring and his. Again and again He had repeated this promise, so that even among heathen nations, whose belief in Him was lost or obscured or corrupted, there still remained broken fragments of the tradition that there would one day be born into the world a Person who would restore the original greatness of the human race.

But among the Jewish people, the descendants of Abraham, the tradition concerning Him whom they called the Messias was not fragmentary nor vague. They knew from God’s explicit disclos-

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ures that He was to be of the race of Abraham, of the house of Abraham's grandson, Jacob, who was called Israel, of the kingly lineage of David, that He was to be born of a virgin in the town of Bethlehem, and that He was to be called Emmanuel, which means "God dwelling in our midst." Nor was the hour of His coming less definitely stated; it was to be at a season of worldwide peace, and the angel who revealed it called it "the fulness of time." It was as though all the instants of time, all ebb and flow of tides, all alternations of seasons, every rising and setting of the sun converged to this dawning of the Sun of Justice upon the world. In this fulness every promise and prophecy were to be fulfilled, the salvation of the past would be accomplished and that of the future assured.

Mary left her residence in the Temple when she reached the age of betrothal, which among the Jews was twelve years. Her father had died, and she had been betrothed to Joseph, a just man of her tribe, some years her senior. He had been born in Bethlehem, but at the time of the betrothal was living like Mary, at Nazareth, where he followed the trade of carpenter.

Among the Jews betrothal was a solemn cere-

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mony, frequently equivalent to true marriage, but invariably followed after a certain lapse of time by the marriage ceremony. Until the marriage was solemnized the betrothed pair lived apart, and the evidences are that at the time of the Annunciation Joseph had not yet taken Mary as his wife.

It was the fulness of time, therefore, when, as the Gospel tells us, "the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the House of David, and the virgin's name was Mary."

For this stupendous errand God selected a certain one of his archangels, that very Gabriel who had revealed to the Prophet Daniel the time of the coming of the Messias and who had recently been His messenger to Zachary. God sent him to a certain city of Galilee and to a particular designated person in that city, the virgin whose name was Mary. Mary was in her quiet house, perhaps engaged upon some household task, perhaps at prayer, when the angel entered and greeted her with the words: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

The angel's salutation to Mary as "full of grace," is an evidence of the fact that never since the instant in which God infused her soul into her body had she been excluded from Divine favor, the mark of which is sanctifying grace. She was blessed above all women, not only because God had chosen her to be His Mother, but because in view of that selection He had already sanctified her. If she had ever been stained with sin her store of grace would be incomplete and imperfect and she could not have been proclaimed blessed above other women if she shared with them God's disfavor and bore with them the mark of the original curse He had pronounced against Eve.

Mary, the Gospel continues, "having heard, was troubled at his saying and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be." Mary's very holiness hid her holiness from her. But regarding herself as she did as the least of God's handmaids she was naturally astonished and perturbed that she should be thus saluted. She said nothing, but the angel could read the trouble in her thoughts, could see how her humility took fright at the extraordinary words, and he hastened to reassure her. "And the angel

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said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end."

As the angel spoke Mary undoubtedly realized the meaning of his words. This, then, was the explanation of the century-old Promise; this was the utterance of things hidden and yet foreshadowed from the foundation of the world. This was the hour of the vindication of the seed of Abraham, of the redemption of Israel, of the restoration of the throne of David. The Redeemer was to be no other than the son of God, and she, even she, was to be His Mother.

When she spoke again it was with the simple dignity of one who had risen to the height to which God had called her. She desired only to be informed how child-bearing and motherhood were to be reconciled with her virginity, and so she said to the angel: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" In God's sight her

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virginity was her dearest possession. It was the adornment, the "signet of resemblance," which had drawn the eyes of the King to her beauty and which it was His will and His pleasure that she should forever wear.

The angel answered her: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren. Because no word shall be impossible with God."

Not in vain had God chosen this maiden and dowered her with His graces. A supreme moment had come, not only in her life but in the history of the human race. God had spoken to her through His angel, and He was waiting for her reply, upon which hung the fate of the world, for supreme among her gifts was her free will, which had never been weakened by sin nor warped by the inclination to it. And now as she spoke there came to the support of her decision all the garnered holiness of her life, all the humility of her enlightened mind, all the mature supernatural

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wisdom stored up during her years of seclusion in the Temple. She said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word."

As she uttered these words the Son of God became incarnate in her virginal womb by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, and she became truly the Mother of Him who is Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, generated by God the Father from all eternity. The Flesh that became His Body was assumed from her flesh, the Blood that flowed in His veins had its source in hers. Christ had, of course, no earthly father. St. Joseph, at that time affianced and subsequently wedded to Mary, stood to her in the relation of protector and guide.

This Divine Motherhood of Mary is the source of all her privileges, the keystone and crown of her dignity. For this she was conceived without sin, for this she was preserved stainless in soul and inviolate in body, that she might bear Him who is supernal Sanctity. If we call that Land Holy in which He was born and lived, how holy must she have been of whom He was born and from whom He drew life! Still it was not because of her holiness that He chose her for His

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Mother, but because she was to be His Mother that she was made holy. "The Most High hath sanctified His own tabernacle." A poet who loved Our Lady very dearly wrote:

"He that made all things had not done
Till He had made Himself thy Son."

As an evidence of the truth of his great Announcement, a proof that no word is impossible with God, the angel told Mary that her cousin Elizabeth was about to become a mother. Elizabeth was the wife of a priest named Zachary and was herself descended on her father's side from "the daughters of Aaron." She and Zachary were devout servants of the Lord, but they had no children, and this lay on them as a heavy sorrow, for a priest of the Old Law would naturally long for a son to continue the priestly line, and besides the Jews regarded the condition of childlessness with scorn and reproach. For years Zachary and Elizabeth had besought God to send them a child, but they were growing old now, Elizabeth was past the age of child-bearing and they had practically relinquished hope of an answer to their prayers.

But six months before, while Zachary was

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engaged in his sacred functions at the evening hour of incense, the angel Gabriel had appeared to him and told him that Elizabeth would bear a child who should be called John and grow up to be great before the Lord and to prepare the way for the Messias. When the very greatness of Zachary's desire made him doubt, he was stricken with dumbness, and the angel told him that so he should remain until the birth of his son.

When Zachary's week of service was ended he returned to his home in the hill-country, to a town that has been identified with the modern Ain Karem (St. John of the Mountains), situated about four and a half miles from Jerusalem. When a month had passed by Elizabeth knew that she was to become a mother and in reverent exultation she withdrew to a country house of her husband's, where she remained for five months, for she said to herself: "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he hath had regard to take away my reproach among men."

This, then, was the wonder that the angel Gabriel made known to Mary as proof of the still greater Wonder that God had wrought in her. Not that she looked for proof or needed it, for

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her mind had accepted the angel's words in perfect faith, but these two great mysteries were related elements in the Divine Plan, and Mary's knowledge of the dispensation to Elizabeth was a necessary step in the development of that Plan. Perhaps Mary realized this and acted under Divine inspiration, or it may have been the gentleness of her unblemished nature which urged her to go at once to her kinswoman, so miraculously blessed, in order to rejoice with her and mingle her praise of God with her cousin's.

Mary went, therefore, the Gospel tells us, "with haste" to Zachary's house in the hills, where Elizabeth was still living in seclusion. She went with haste because she was eager to be about the accomplishment of God's will; she went, apparently, alone, for she was still only the betrothed wife of Joseph, and she went in silence and recollection, for she carried within her the Most Holy God.

And so she came at last to the country house of Zachary, where Elizabeth was living in retirement. Elizabeth hastened forward to greet her young kinswoman, and it is not surprising that the meeting between them has inspired so many artistic masterpieces. Elizabeth, the long-wedded

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wife, the story of many years of patient hopefulness written on her features, now lighted up with exultant joy, as, conscious of her coming motherhood, she received into her house her virginal cousin and recognized in a flash of heaven-sent illumination that Mary also was to become a mother; Mary, a girl in years, a woman in dignity, beautiful with a beauty which sin had had no opportunity to mar, the dazzling whiteness of her soul and the dawning splendor of her Divine maternity shining in her lowered eyes.

As she entered Zachary's house she greeted Elizabeth and at the sound of her voice Elizabeth felt the child leap in her womb, and under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost she replied to Mary's salutation with the very words the angel had used in addressing her: "Blessed art thou among women," she cried, and she added, "and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears the infant in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord."

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It was Mary's turn to speak and she answered with that sublime canticle which from its first word in Latin is called the *Magnificat*, and which for centuries the Church has assigned to be sung at Vespers. She said: "My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because He that is mighty hath done great things to me; and holy is His name. And His mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear Him. He hath showed might in His arm; He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things and the rich He hath sent empty away. He hath received Israel His servant, being mindful of His mercy. As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to His seed forever."

The words uttered by Elizabeth and Mary show their full realization of what had come to pass. Elizabeth knew that in Mary she was receiving as her guest "the mother of her Lord," and out of the fulness of her revealed knowledge she promised her the accomplishment of everything

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the angel had foretold. Mary's song soared to heights that only her humility could scale. She praised God for His mercy in fulfilling the pledge of redemption He had given to Abraham and renewed to his descendants, and she extolled His greatness in so uplifting her lowliness as to make her the mother of the Redeemer, His Son, and the instrument of the fulfillment of His promise.

In the instant in which John leaped at the sound of Mary's voice he was sanctified, that is, he was cleansed of the sin in which he had been conceived, and so he was born sinless into the world. Mary remained with Elizabeth, probably in her home in the city, during the interval of three months until the birth of John, when she returned to Nazareth.

Elizabeth in due time gave birth to her miraculous child, and was naturally the object of many felicitations from her kinsfolk and friends. On the eighth day after his birth, they assembled, according to custom, to circumcise the child and they were of one accord in bestowing on him the name of his father, Zachary, but to their astonishment Elizabeth interposed and insisted that he be called John. "There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name," they reminded her,

and thereupon they had recourse to Zachary. Their wonder was only intensified when he demanded a tablet and wrote upon it: "John is his name."

At this the punishment of dumbness was taken away from him, and he was filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke in prophecy concerning his son: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, because He hath visited and wrought the redemption of His people; and hath raised up an horn of salvation to us in the house of David, His servant. As he spoke by the mouths of His holy prophets who are from the beginning: Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us. To perform mercy to our fathers, and to remember His holy testament, the oath which He swore to Abraham, our father, that He would grant to us, that being delivered from the hand of our enemies we may serve Him without fear, in holiness and justice before Him all our days. And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways: to give knowledge of salvation to His people, unto the remission of their sins; through the bowels of the mercy of our God, in which the Orient from on high hath visited us,

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to enlighten that that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death."

No wonder that, as the Gospel says, fear came upon all those who were witnesses of these things, and that they said to one another concerning the infant John: "What an one, think ye, shall this child be?" Perhaps some of them lived to see him point out Mary's Son as the Lamb of God.

Mary returned to Nazareth from the house of Zachary either shortly before or shortly after the birth of John, and her coming brought great affliction to the heart of Joseph, her espoused husband, for it was evident to him that she was about to become a mother.

He had no knowledge of what had transpired between her and the angel prior to her departure, and since among the Hebrews betrothal was so frequently regarded as true marriage, the terrible suspicions which assailed him concerning the purity of this purest of women would not be shared by anyone else. During the time of his anguish, for there is no more cruel trial to the human heart than to find unworthiness where it has placed its trust, Mary, to whom purity was so dear that her breast was the chosen abode of the Author of Purity, and who could not but be aware

that hers was doubted, said no word to remove those doubts. Her secret was not hers but God's, and she left it to Him to reveal it when He would.

Joseph was an upright man who abhorred sin, but he could not bring himself to hold up to public scorn her whom he held in such veneration, and so he determined to sever privately the bond of their betrothal. However, Joseph, too, had his appointed part in the designs of God and it was about to be revealed to him. One night when he had found relief from his troubled thoughts in sleep an angel of the Lord appeared to him and said: "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. For He shall save His people from their sins."

So Joseph knew the truth at last, and we can well believe that in his sense of unworthiness, nothing but the angelic command would have induced him to take as his wife her in whom he now recognized that Woman promised from of old, for whose coming so many generations had yearned. But having received the command he did make her his wife, and with what reverence

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he must have conducted her across the threshold of his lowly house and established her as its mistress, knowing as he did that she herself was become the House of God and the Gate of Heaven. In the eyes of men he was her husband, her natural guardian and protector, the father of her child, but Mary and Joseph both knew that he was God's steward, chosen to be the custodian of the infancy of His Son and of the honor of that Son's Mother. And so with her he waited in awe for the august event of His Birth.

The Jews at that time were a conquered people and their country was a Roman possession, ruled over by Roman governors, with only the pale shadow of a king allowed to sit upon what had been David's glorious throne, and this only by way of placating the Jews' wounded pride. Augustus, the Roman emperor of that time, conceived the idea of taking a census of all the people in subjection to him, and so he issued a decree that every family should return to the city of its origin to be enrolled.

When this decree began to be enforced by the governor of Syria, Joseph, who was of the house and family of David, was obliged to leave Nazareth with Mary, who was of the same ancestry,

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and go to David's city, Bethlehem in Judea. They set out, Joseph on foot, leading by the bridle the little ass on which Mary sat. They travelled in the fashion of the poor over the uneven roads, jostled by wealthy caravans, beaten upon by the weather, although they brought with them Him who holds the universe in the hollow of His hand.

And so they came to Bethlehem, from whose pastures David had been called to the guidance of the kingdom of Israel, Bethlehem, to which the prophet's finger had pointed centuries ago as the birthplace of the Messias, "the captain of Israel." But hundreds of others had come to Bethlehem too, filling inn and dwelling-house, and when Mary and Joseph reached the inn they were told that there was no room for them. They went from house to house, but met with no better fortune.

Bethlehem was still a pastoral town. On its hillsides shepherds still watched their flocks as they had in David's day, sometimes seeking shelter from the inclement nights in caves hollowed out of the rocks. It was to one of these that Joseph finally led Mary, wearied with travel and fruitless search, and it was here among the beasts of the field, in a cave open to the night, that Mary

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brought forth into the world her Son, the Son of God. He came "when silence was upon all things and the earth was in the midst of its course." He was conceived miraculously and miraculously born. Mary alone of all women brought forth in joy, though her Son was to be a Man of Sorrows and she the mother of affliction. She brought Him forth and wrapt Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a straw-filled manger, whence the cattle took their food, and bowed herself in adoration before this first altar of the Incarnate God who was her little Son. Surely there was silence in that place. No words were needful between her and Joseph, as they looked with rapturous, dazzled eyes upon the Dayspring, the Orient from on High, the Flower of the Root of Jesse, the Light of the World.

But though earth was silent, Heaven could not hold its peace, and so it happened that a company of shepherds who were watching their flocks in the open, were startled to behold in their midst an angel surrounded with "the brightness of God," who, seeing how greatly they were filled with fear, said to them: "Fear not; for behold I bring you good tiding of great joy, that shall be to all the people: For this day is born

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to you a Savior who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger." As he ceased speaking he was joined by a great company of radiant spirits, who praised God that His promise to men was fulfilled at last, crying out: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will."

When the angels had departed the shepherds did as they had been bidden and went over to Bethlehem, and there they found the Infant Christ lying in the stall of a cattle shed and they spread abroad what had been proclaimed to them, that this Child was "Christ the Lord," the long-promised Messias, and every word they uttered Mary laid away in her heart, pondering them in the long years that were to intervene between that and the time she should be called upon to relate them to the Evangelists, whose mission it would be to proclaim to men that "God hath made both Lord and Christ this same Jesus whom you have crucified."

On the eighth day after His birth the Child was circumcised, according to the law given to Moses, and the holy Name Jesus conferred upon

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Him, as the angel had directed on the occasion of the Annunciation and again at the revelation to Joseph.

I have already referred to the expectation of the Messias that existed outside the Jewish nation, among those whom the Jews called Gentiles or "Strangers," an expectation based on the clouded remembrance of an early revelation or acquired through the intercourse of the Gentiles with the Jews. This expectation existed in a very definite form among the wise men of Persia, called Magi, a class who were at once priests and kings and who were deeply versed in ancient learning, especially the science of the stars. Among them the belief had been handed down that a great King was to be born to the Jews, at whose birth a wonderful star would appear in the heavens. Some time after the birth of Christ three of these Persian sages came to Jerusalem, the royal city, asking to be directed to the newborn King, Whose star they had seen in the East. The rumor of a rival King brought great trouble of mind to King Herod, and, sending for the strangers, he questioned them concerning their errand. He soon perceived that there was no doubt in their minds that the long-expected Christ

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had come and he inquired of the Jewish priests and scribes as to where the event should take place. With their knowledge of the prophecies, they answered promptly, "In Bethlehem of Judea."

After once more questioning the Magi he directed them to Bethlehem, requesting them to bring him word when they had found the Child, so that he too might come and adore Him.

When the wise men left Jerusalem the star that had led them from Persia re-appeared and went before them until it stood over the house to which Joseph had removed his charges, and, going in, the Magi found the Child, "with Mary His mother." Her arms were the throne from which He received the homage of His royal visitors and doubtless it was she who accepted in His name their costly gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. But the wise men did not return to Herod as he had commissioned them, but acting on a heavenly command they returned to their country by another way.

In His circumcision Christ submitted Himself to a law which He had made but by which He was not bound, and forty days after His birth He did the same when He was presented in the

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Temple. And since on this occasion Mary underwent the ceremonial purification required of Jewish women after childbirth, she also obeyed a law whose provisions were never meant for her, inasmuch as in her there was no impurity to be removed.

But Moses had commanded that every male child was to be regarded as belonging in a special manner to God's service, for which reason he was to be presented in the Temple forty days after birth, when he could be bought back by his parents on payment, if they were wealthy, of a lamb, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons, and if they were poor, of only the doves and pigeons. It was the offering of the poor that Mary and Joseph brought with them when they went to the Temple on the fortieth day.

As they mounted the Temple steps, Mary with the Child in her arms and Joseph carrying the cage with the offering, how their hearts must have thrilled to realize that another prophecy concerning the Messias was being fulfilled, that this Temple, though less beautiful than that of Solomon which preceded it, was to surpass it in glory, since into the second Temple God's Anointed was to come. The very stones, it would

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seem, must cry out as He came to the place where He was worshipped with incense and burnt offerings, for which He was to substitute Himself as Sacrifice, and the veil before the Holy of Holies, which would be riven at His death, must have quivered at His bodily approach.

There was living in the Holy City at that time a just and devout Israelite named Simeon, who so longed for the coming of the Messias and the accomplishment of the things the prophets had foretold concerning Him that he had received assurance from Heaven that he should not die until with his own eyes he had seen the Christ. He was very old now and he knew that this must happen soon, and so it was not by chance, but by the direct leading of the Holy Ghost, that he entered the Temple as the little group, consisting of a young girl carrying a Baby and accompanied by a grave faced man, made the offering for the Child.

Mary saw him as he came towards her with eager arms outstretched and relinquished to him her precious Burden. She saw how reverently he received it, how rapturously he looked into the little Face in which he saw the culmination of his desires and the realization of the hope of the

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world, and she heard his tremulous voice exclaiming: "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace, because mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples. A light to the revelation of the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."

Mary and Joseph were struck with wonder at hearing these things, not wonder proceeding from puzzled ignorance, as if they did not know who this Child was, but the awed admiration of persons beholding fresh manifestations of what they already knew. Clearer declarations of her Son's identity Mary had already heard from the lips of Gabriel and Elizabeth, and Joseph from the angelic messenger, but presently Simeon spoke again, blessing the parents, and then turning to Mary he uttered words which may have been to her a further revelation of what her Divine Motherhood would mean. "Behold," he said, "this Child is set for the fall and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted: And thy own soul a sword shall pierce, that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed."

A sword to pierce her soul! She knew that no

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sorrow could reach her, no grief pierce her heart, unless it had first transpierced the heart of her Son, and in that hour the dark shadow of Calvary first fell across her soul. She gathered Him back to her breast and drew her mantle protectingly about Him, but before she and Joseph left the Temple precincts they heard the holy woman Anna, who spent her days there in prayer and fasting, proclaim the Infant in Mary's arms as the Messias that had been promised for the redemption of Israel.

Almost immediately after this Mary felt at her breast that sharp point of sorrow of which Simeon had spoken, for when Herod perceived that he had been deluded by the wise men he determined to take extreme measures to rid himself of the Child-King of whom they spoke, and thereupon he commanded that all the male children born in Bethlehem and its neighborhood within two years should be put to death. But before this order was issued an angel appeared in sleep to Joseph and commanded him to take the Child and His mother and flee with them to Egypt and remain there until he should be directed to return.

A long and difficult journey it was, compelled as they were to travel amid the darkness and

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dangers of the night, and driven by fear of pursuit, but more than all its discomforts Mary must have felt the anger and hatred against her Child and the threat against His life Who is the Life of the world. Keenly, too, she must have felt the grief of all those other mothers whose children, called by the Church "the flowers of martyrdom," were snatched from their breasts and slain before their eyes.

They remained in Egypt until after the death of Herod and when they returned to their own country it was St. Joseph's intention to make a home for them in Bethlehem, but on learning that Herod's son Archelaus, who was notorious for his cruelty, was reigning in Judea, he determined to go to Galilee instead. And so the Holy Family took up their abode in Nazareth, where Mary and Joseph were living at the time of their espousals and where the Incarnation had taken place. This, therefore, was the town in which Christ was to spend all the years of His life until the beginning of His public ministry and it was because of this that men later spoke of Him as the Nazarite.

Here he dwelt with Mary His Mother, St. Joseph guarding and providing for both of them.

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Jesus was truly Divine but He was truly human also and He grew and developed as other children do, only of course without meeting any of the obstacles to development that occur in other children. Here He grew under Mary's loving gaze. Her guiding hand directed Him when He took His first step, Whose sacred Feet were to tread so wearily the roads of Galilee and Judea in quest of souls, and walk the terrible way of the cross at the last; His first word imitated the cadences of her voice, and perhaps it was even given her to see His Holy Face take on resemblance to her own.

Every office that it falls to a mother's lot to perform for her child Mary did for Jesus, preparing His food, keeping His garments in repair and weaving for Him that seamless robe which was stripped from Him when He was nailed to the Cross, and for which the soldiers cast lots while He hung dying. St. Joseph worked at the trade of carpenter and doubtless Mary's glance often met his in reverent tenderness above the head of the Holy Child as He played about the shop or in the doorway of their house. In the eyes of their neighbors He was merely Mary's Boy, the Son of the carpenter, but in theirs He was the Christ of the Lord.

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Every day they joined their hearts to His when He offered homage to His Heavenly Father and He accompanied them when they went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, but when they went yearly to Jerusalem for the solemnities of the Passover He remained behind in Nazareth. So passed His childhood till his twelfth year, which was the age at which Jewish boys attained legal manhood. The Passover was one of the three occasions in the year when all men were commanded to go to the Temple of Jerusalem, and so at the Paschal season in Christ's twelfth year, when Mary and Joseph set out, they took Jesus with them. How long they remained in the Holy City we do not know, but when they left it to return homeward Jesus deliberately remained behind.

On these occasions men and women travelled during the day in separate companies, the children with either, and so it was only when they met for the first night's encampment that Mary and Joseph, reading the anguished question in each other's eyes, knew that the Treasure of their hearts was missing. They forthwith returned to Jerusalem, and how often during the agony of their search must Mary have remembered

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Simeon's words, as the sword of this sorrow was turned and turned again in her soul.

At last, on the third day, having searched fruitlessly in the city among their relatives and friends, they entered once more the temple courts, and there they saw Him seated in the midst of the venerable and learned doctors of the Jewish law and discoursing with them, not as might an extraordinarily clever boy, but for once lifting the veil which shrouded His Divine wisdom, so that all who heard Him were astounded. Mary hurried to his side and said to Him reproachfully: "Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing."

She spoke as a Mother to Her Son, to Him who had been born of her flesh, Who had taken His sustenance from her breast and had lived in obedience to her for twelve years, but He who answered her was also the Son of God and He said, "How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" They are His first recorded words and there are many who find them harsh, as though He wished to put a slight upon His Mother and administer to her a public rebuke. Undoubtedly on this as on other similar occasions it was His

intention to manifest His Divinity, to show those who were witnesses of what He said and did that while He had no desire to repudiate the relation in which Mary stood to Him, nevertheless He had a heavenly relationship, too, that in short He was no other than the Son of God and they must be given evidence of it.

But on the other hand we can believe that the words of His reproach were uttered with the tenderest intonation, as though He said: "How is it, O Beloved, that you are grieved or disquieted by any act of Mine, you who are aware that no evil can befall Me without My will, Who have at My command legions of angels? How is it that you did not remember what you know so well, that I am the Son of God, sent into the world to do His work? Surely you are not astonished when I set about my task." But so far was He from wishing to reject Mary's authority over Him, that, although He was then a man according to the Law, He left the Temple and returned with her and Joseph to Nazareth and was subject to them. And so far was Mary from regarding His words as disrespectful that they were among those she treasured in her heart.

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For men might subsequently deny that the wisdom which Christ displayed during His public preaching was anything more than such as He might have acquired at an age of maturity, although we know it was then said of Him that "never did man speak like this man," but it was beyond the human power of a twelve-year-old boy to confute the Jewish scribes with "His wisdom and His answers," and Mary knew that in His attitude to her on that occasion He had manifested His divinity as clearly as when before the eyes of the three Apostles on Mount Thabor, "His face did shine as the sun and His garments became whiter than snow."

And she had eighteen more years of close companionship with Him, years during which she watched Him grow from boyhood to youth, and from youth to manhood, and become the most beautiful of the sons of men. He learned Joseph's craft, first assisting him and later doubtless taking on Himself all the work. She saw Him go forth to His work in the morning and she welcomed Him reverently when He returned at night, but during the day He never left her heart. Perhaps in the evening they sat together, with Joseph while he lived, and during those hours of

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close communion He told her something of what He would do in the future. For it is natural for a son to speak of his ambitions to his mother, and it was the ambition of Mary's Son to die for the life of the world.

They supported St. Joseph in their arms when the hour of his death came and he breathed forth his soul on the breast of Jesus, relinquishing Mary into His sole keeping. And so Mary waited for the hour of separation, the hour that would take Jesus from her side, not for three days, but for three years, to be restored to her again, bruised and broken from the Cross.

When Jesus was beginning His thirtieth year, she must have heard with a tightening of the heart of the preaching of John the Baptist in the region of Bethania, for she would remember that John's father Zachary had proclaimed him the prophet of the Highest, who would go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways. And when the hour of Christ's departure from Nazareth came at last, it is probable that there were no words of farewell between these two whose hearts spoke together, but that Mary's lips were pressed to His Sacred Hands and Feet and she

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felt His kiss upon her brow as He held her to His Sacred Heart. After this He set out for Bethania to be baptised by John. Doubtless, also, word was brought to her of the marvel that took place on that occasion when from the open heavens the Eternal Father declared this Son of hers to be His well-beloved Son.

During Christ's forty days' sojourn in the desert, near Jericho, her thoughts followed Him. And so far was she from shrinking from what was required of her as His mother that she herself anticipated the hour of the public manifestation of His power, and, as it were, bared her heart to that sword of which Simeon had spoken.

After Christ left the desert He chose His first disciples, and with them left Judea and returned to Galilee, where they were invited to be present at a wedding feast in the little village of Cana, the native town of his disciple Nathaniel, not far from Nazareth. Mary also was among the guests and as the festivities proceeded she became aware, either through her housewisely instinct, or because of the kindly sympathy of her nature, which led those who knew her to confide their difficulties to her, that sufficient wine had not been

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provided by the host, and that presently the supply would be exhausted. It would appear only a minor human predicament, although in the East the failure of the wine would doubtless be regarded as a serious breach of hospitality, but Mary's tender heart was eager to come to the relief of the difficulty.

She sought out Jesus among the guests and said to Him: "They have no wine." She made neither suggestion or request; she knew there was no need. But He turned to her and said: "Woman, what is that to me and to thee? My hour is not yet come." In these words many have professed to see another instance of Christ's rejection of Mary and have made them an excuse for denying honor to her. But in the language which Jesus spoke, the term He used was one of the most profound respect, and here also we can well imagine with what accents of infinite tenderness He would have made this reply to her appeal. The best evidence of this is the way it was received by Mary, for she went forthwith to the attendants, perhaps with a confident smile upon her lips, and said to them: "Whatsoever He shall say to you, do ye." Not for nothing was she His mother; not for nothing had she dwelt with Him

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for thirty years and grown familiar with His power, His tenderness for men, His deference to her desires. There was perfect understanding between them.

The purification laws of the Jews required them to have on hand a copious supply of water for the washing of feet and hands before partaking of a meal, and there were standing in the supper room six large stone jars in which this water was customarily kept. Jesus told the attendants to fill these jars with water and when they had filled them He directed them to carry some of the contents to the steward of the feast. What they drew out was wine, and when the mystified steward had tasted it he called the bridegroom aside and said to him: "Every man at first setteth forth good wine and when men have well drunk then that which is worse. But thou hast kept the good wine until now."

It was Christ's first miracle, and He performed it before the time set in the Eternal Counsels for the public display of His power, when He should assert His mastership over the sacredness of His Father's house; He performed it on what we may call a mere hint from His mother, her simple statement of the need of their hosts. But He

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made it the occasion also of confirming His new disciples in their faith. "Greater things than these shalt thou see," He had promised Nathaniel, when he expressed astonishment that Christ should have seen him when he was in a distant place, and this miracle was one of the greater things. In this change of water into wine He proved to all who were witnesses of what He did that He was truly the Son of God; and in his gracious consenting to her appeal and His tender meeting of this human need, how truly He proved Himself also to be the Son of Mary.

From Cana Christ went to Capharnaum, a town on the shore of the Lake of Tiberias, accompanied by his disciples and also, the Gospel says "by His Mother and His brethren." Now these brethren of Jesus were not His own brothers or Mary's children, for she had had no child but Jesus, but among the Jews it was customary to speak thus of a man's close kindred, such as his cousins, who, in this instance, were James, the son of Alpheus, Judas Thaddeus, Joseph and Simon the Cananean. Of these James, then called the Less, Thaddeus and Simon subsequently became Apostles.

From Capharnaum, where He remained only a

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few days, Christ returned to Judea in order to be in Jerusalem for the Passover, and, though the Gospel does not say so, it seems probable that His Mother, especially since she had been so recently in His company, also went up to the Holy City for the solemnity, and in that event she would have been present in the Temple, in the Court of the Women, when, in the majesty and authority of His Godhead, Jesus drove the money-changers and the sellers with their wares out of the sacred place. This, at last, was His "hour," in which under the most solemn and impressive circumstances He proclaimed Himself "both Lord and Christ."

If his mother was not an eye-witness of these things, she was undoubtedly informed of them by those who were, but henceforth, until the last hour of all, she appears only in the background of His life, though never ceasing to be the object of His solicitude, as that last hour showed. The probability is that she returned after this to Nazareth, where she would have heard of His return to Galilee through Samaria.

He left Judea because Herod, the son of the king who had sought His life in infancy, had cast John the Baptist into prison and the Phari-

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sees, His deadly enemies, could easily have made Christ in turn the object of Herod's ill-will; and He went into Galilee largely that He might preach first to His own countrymen. From her retirement His mother would hear of the progress of his journey, of how the Galileans came out to welcome Him to their towns, and when He reached Cana, where He had made water wine, she would hear how He cured the ruler's son who lay sick at Capharnaum.

He then came to Nazareth and the fame of His preaching and His miracles preceded Him. Doubtless while he remained in the village where He was brought up He made Mary's house once more His home, though we know that otherwise during these years He had not where to lay his head. Mary could see how his fellow-townspeople crowded about Him in the street and she could hear how they said to one another: "How came this man by His wisdom and His miracles? Is not this the carpenter's son. Is not His mother called Mary, and his brethren James and Joseph and Simon and Jude? and his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence therefore hath He all these things?"

Doubtless, also, she was in the synagogue when

He went there, as was His custom, on the Sabbath day, and she saw Him stand up to read, receiving from the hands of an official the book of Isaias the Prophet. What must it have been to hear the tones of His voice as He read to the assembled people the words the Prophet had written centuries before: “The spirit of the Lord is upon me, wherefore he hath anointed me, to preach the gospel to the poor He hath sent me, to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captives and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of reward.” Then, closing the book and returning it to the attendant, He declared to the people that there and then they saw and heard the fulfillment of this prophecy.

If Mary was present she could see the faces of those who listened, and read on some wonder and admiration but on most indignation and unbelief, and she could hear these saying to one another: “Is not this the son of Joseph? How came this man by all these things? and what wisdom is this that is given to Him and such mighty works as are wrought by His hands?” Then, as Christ told them plainly His realization of their unbelief, and

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referred to the proverb according to which no prophet was honored in his own country, their smouldering anger flamed up and they surged about Him, reviling Him, and thrust Him out of the city.

Nazareth was built on the brow of a hill and in their resentment they would have cast Him headlong over the precipice, but He had recourse to His almighty power and passed unharmed through their midst. For eleven centuries a church called Our Lady of the Fear has marked the spot where Mary, driven by her anxiety for His safety to follow the threatening crowd, is said to have leaned against the rock, overcome by her fear that they had carried out their terrible purpose.

From Nazareth Christ went to Capharnaum, where He made His permanent home, leaving it for journeys into the surrounding districts and to Jerusalem for the great festivals, but always returning to Capharnaum. From the nearby Nazareth, His mother would naturally hear of His activities, since for three years the country rang with the fame of them. She would hear how He cured the lame and the blind and the dumb and the leprous, how the very devils obeyed

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the sound of His voice, how He raised the dead to life, and her maternal heart would thrill with special sympathy with Jairus and the widow of Naim, whose dead children He restored. She would hear how some followed and some rejected Him, and she took to her heart all who loved Him and mourned over those who refused to share His chalice and His kingdom. But only twice in the course of these tirelessly active years do we hear of her directly.

On the first occasion she came to Capharnaum with some of her relatives and sought to speak to Him. Jesus had been preaching and working miracles incessantly, so that when John the Baptist, who was still in prison, sent messengers to inquire if He was truly the Christ, He had only to point to the things He had done. He was followed wherever He went by such crowds that often it was impossible for Him to break His fast.

There were some of His relatives, who, when they heard the tumult of which He was the centre, remembering the obscurity and familiarity with themselves in which He had grown up, were convinced that nothing but insanity could explain

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His claims to be the Messias and the Son of God, and so they determined to take Him by force out of His dangerous position. When they arrived where He was they were accompanied by His mother. Now it is certain that she did not seek Him with the same intention as theirs. They may have been ignorant of His identity, but she was not. Even if His human relationship to them blinded them to His Divinity, they should have believed the miracles they knew Him to have performed.

But Mary's relationship to Him was so far from being an obstacle to her belief, that her belief had, as it were, been the cause of it, as Elizabeth had long ago assured her: "Blessed art thou that hast believed, because those things shall be accomplished that were spoken to thee by the Lord." The greatest of all her blessings was her Divine Motherhood and she owed it to her unquestioning acceptance of Gabriel's word. She knew that this Jesus after whom men were thronging, although her Son, the Fruit of her womb, was likewise the Eternal Son of the Father, and so little need had she of miracles to confirm her in this knowledge that the very first

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of His miracles had been the result of the greatness of her faith.

Her purpose in seeking Jesus was probably the quite natural desire to speak with Him and reassure herself as to His safety, but so great was the crowd about the house in which He was that she and His kinsfolk could not approach, and so they sent word to Him of their arrival. Jesus was refuting the accusation of His enemies that He cast out devils by the power of the devil, when someone in the crowded room said to him: "Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek thee."

Jesus paused, and looked about Him, His glance resting on one and another of the disciples whom He had so recently chosen, on Simon Peter, who had left his nets and his fishing, on Matthew, who had left his post at the receipt of custom, on James the Less and Thaddeus, whose relationship to Him had not prevented their recognizing Him as the Son of God, and He said: "Who is my mother and my brethren?" and pointing to His disciples He added: "Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in Heaven He is my mother and sister and brother."

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It is strange that anyone should take these words to mean that Christ was unwilling to recognize His mother, should regard them as another proof that He who taught that parents should be honored dishonored His. They are rather the highest tribute to Mary. For they declare the accomplishment of God's will to be the highest human perfection and express His pleasure in His newly-chosen disciples for their willingness to do that will. Matthew had left all for Him? He was all to Mary. Peter loved Him? So did Mary. John was dear to Him? Mary was dearer. For no human creature ever fulfilled God's will as Mary did, and it is not to be believed that she whose perfection in this respect made Him choose her for His mother, became less dear to Him after He became her Son. The words He used on this occasion were His way of commending His disciples for their willingness to imitate even remotely the manner in which His mother performed the Will of His heavenly Father.

The circumstances of the second occasion on which His mother is mentioned are very similar to these and are covered by the same explanation. Christ had expelled from a wretched man an evil spirit of dumbness, and His enemies, instead of

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believing, made their usual charge, that He did these things through the power of evil, whereupon Christ showed how unreasonable it was to say that one evil spirit would cast out another. Suddenly, a woman in the crowd who had seen the miracle and heard His words, overcome by admiration for His power and His wisdom, cried out: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck!" Christ answered: "Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." This was not to deny the blessedness of His mother, which He knew better than anyone else, but it was to declare that all might share her blessedness if they would do as she did and hear and keep God's word. If the woman's cry and her Son's answer fell on Mary's ears she would recognize in both a fulfillment of her own prophetic words: "Henceforth all generations shall call me blessed."

So Mary's life went on, perhaps with occasional glimpses of her Son, sometimes of her own seeking, as when she went to Capharnaum; sometimes when like Him she went to Jerusalem for a great festival. In such an event she may have been present at the Passover when He told the Jews in the plainest language He had yet used

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that He was equal with the Father and that in rejecting Him they rejected Moses who wrote of Him, or at the Feast of Tabernacles she may have heard the murmuring in the multitude concerning Him, how one man said, "He is a good man," and others, "No, but he seduceth the people," and some, "This is the Christ," to which others answered, "Doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Doth not the Scripture say: That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem the town where David was?"

It was not for Mary to speak and tell them that she, His mother, was of the seed of David, and that in Bethlehem, the town of David, she had indeed brought Him forth.

But as the murmurs grew against Him she must have remembered what Simeon had said, holding Him in his arms, that He should be a sign of contradiction, and that according as they accepted or rejected Him many would rise or fall.

Finally came the great miracle of the raising of Lazarus to life when he had been four days dead, a miracle that roused His enemies to the height of fury against Him. Jesus had left Capharnaum some time previous and come to the district lying east of the Jordan, where He worked and taught,

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going thence to Bethania, the home of Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, a town west of the Jordan in Judea, about two miles from Jerusalem, and here He raised Lazarus to life. As a result of the miracle the Great Council of the chief priests and Pharisees assembled to take measures against Him, He meantime continuing His journeys through Samaria and Galilee.

The Passover was drawing near, and when it was seen that Jesus was not among the number of those who came up beforehand to be purified, His enemies professed to be greatly scandalized thereat. He was approaching the Holy City, but stopped at Bethania, where Lazarus and his sisters made Him a supper and Mary anointed his feet, as He said, for His burial. It seems probable that these friends of His were known to His mother also, for Mary at least, who is identified with Mary Magdalen, stood with her beneath the Cross.

When at last it was time for Him to go to Jerusalem we know that He entered it in triumph, that somehow the enmity against Him was borne down by the love of the people for Him, and that when these last saw Him approaching the city, seated on the colt of an ass, they were beside

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themselves with enthusiasm. They spread their garments under His feet and tore branches from the wayside palm trees to carpet the way before Him, while a mighty shout of acclamation went up: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Somewhere, we may be sure, silent in that shouting throng, was Mary, His mother, gazing rapturously upon Him as He looked into the faces of His people, noting the weariness of His countenance, the result of His three years of unceasing labor for their souls, remembering in her heart the words a prophet had written: "Fear not, daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh sitting on an ass's colt." Near her she could hear a stranger ask: "Who is this?" and the answer, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth of Galilee." But even more clearly would she hear the words uttered thirty-three years before: "Thy own soul a sword shall pierce."

Many times were these words to be fulfilled before another week had passed. During the early part of this Week that Christians call Holy we hear no mention of Mary, but that she kept in close touch with all its terrible happenings is evi-

dent from the fact that when Christ died she was in her place at the foot of the Cross. There is nothing to show that she was in the supper-room when Our Lord kept the Pasch with His disciples, nor that she followed to Gethsemani,— but when He was taken and His disciples fled word would quickly be brought to her.

During that fearful night when He was forsaken and scourged and reviled and mocked and dragged from Caiphas to Pilate, from Pilate to Herod and back to Pilate again, her heart would keep a vigil of sorrow and worship and love, and when He was brought forth to stand on Pilate's balcony, and exhibited, a figure of shame and suffering to the howling mob, He may have caught sight of His mother's agonized uplifted face and have felt that for her at least His sacrifice was not in vain, and when He set out with faltering feet on His last journey she went, too. She was jostled by the crowd, insulted, probably reviled, if she was recognized, thrust back and threatened by the soldiery, but she cared for none of these things. The only thing that mattered to her was that Jesus, her Beloved, was stumbling along that cruel road, dragged and pushed and beaten, carrying a rough-hewn cross on His

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bleeding shoulders, and that she who had borne Him, she who had nourished Him, she who would have emptied her veins for Him, was powerless to help Him now.

On this sad journey she did not go alone. She was accompanied by her sister, Mary of Cleophas, the mother of James the Less, and by Salome, the mother of James the Greater and John the Beloved, and by Mary Magdalen, and somewhere before they reached Calvary they were joined by John, Salome's son.

There is a tradition also that somewhere on that road Mary made her way to the forefront of the crowd that pressed about Him and that suddenly Jesus and His mother stood face to face, looking into each other's eyes, hers suffused with blinding tears to see her Child thus cruelly treated, His filled with compassion for her sorrow and gratitude for her faithful love. Not long did they stand thus, for although Mary in her strength could have borne to look upon Him, the crowd surged between them and hid Him from her sight, and thereafter she could only follow Him by keeping her eyes fastened on the Cross. We do not know where she stood when the top of Golgotha was reached at last, nor how she sur-

vived hearing the awful sounds which told her that they were driving rough nails through the flesh and the sinews of His Sacred Hands and Feet. But when the Cross was raised with her Son uplifted upon it she went quietly to her place at its foot: "There stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother."

With her stood the Apostle John, whom He loved, and the Magdalen, whom He forgave. Together they stood beneath the Cross during the hours of His death agony. She stood so close that she could see His face and read the mocking title over His head: "This is Jesus the King of the Jews," and she remembered that her arms were His first earthly throne; she saw the soldiers cast lots for the garments her hands had fashioned, she heard the people taunt and revile Him, and witnessed with joy amid her sorrow the conversion of one of the robbers who were hanged with Him.

And while she stood there Jesus looked down and saw her standing, unfaltering but sorrowful, beneath Him, and near her He saw John whom He dearly loved. Then He said to her, using the Hebrew term of respect, "Woman, behold thy son," and to John He said: "Son, behold thy mother."

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The night before when He took leave of His disciples, He spoke to them at great length of His desires and His hopes for them; He explained to them clearly who He was and why He had come, and told them of His great love for them and pleaded with them tenderly to love one another, as He had loved them, but there was no need of a long discourse now. He was dying and here was His mother, His heart's dearest, racked with grief for Him, she who had loved Him always as no other creature could love Him because the heart with which she loved was the purest any creature had ever possessed; she would be alone but she must not be left defenceless. He would be gone, but she must not be left childless. And so He turned to John, the friend whom He loved, and gave him in the most solemn moment of His life, the greatest evidence of His love, the surest token of His trust, the care and custody of His mother. "And from that hour the disciple took her to his own."

And so she stood there under the darkened sky and heard Him cry out in His desolation that His heavenly Father had forsaken Him, and she heard, perhaps with the bitterest anguish of all,

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the plaint that came in a failing voice from between His swollen lips that He was athirst.

Then came the loud cry with which He finally yielded up His spirit into His Father's hands and Mary saw His blood-drenched Head droop upon His sacred Breast. She did not falter amid the earthquake shock, when the people fled in panic and the dead left their graves. She still stood, looking into the dead face of her Son. She looked on while the Roman soldier, Longinus, pierced His side with his lance and heard him exclaim, "Indeed, this was the Son of God." Finally came His disciple, the wealthy Joseph of Arimathea, to tell her that he had Pilate's secret permission to remove the Body from the Cross, and she received it, livid and wounded and covered with blood, into her reverent arms. Assisted by the holy women, she prepared Him for His burial and swathed Him in the clean linen sheet that was provided for His shroud, as she had wrapt Him in swaddling clothes when He was born.

There was a garden on Golgotha and here in a new sepulchre hewn from the rock they laid the Body. Beside, the natural quiet of the evening a hush had fallen upon everything, the hush that follows after a tremendous storm and upheaval. As Mary and her companions left the tomb, a

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Roman guard hurried up, sent by Pilate at the instigation of Christ's insatiable enemies. They had remembered that He had foretold that He would rise in three days, and Mary saw them seal the door of the sepulchre and roll a heavy stone to it and then take up their stand before it, prepared to forbid the approach of His friends.

She went away with John, remaining in seclusion during the forty hours that Christ's Body remained in the tomb, but when early in the morning of the first day of the week He rose up alive, casting off the winding sheet and passing through the sealed tomb, it was to Mary His Mother that He first showed Himself and when, kneeling before His glorified wounds, she saw Him in His strength and beauty, all her own wounds were healed and all her tears dried.

During the forty days of His stay upon earth she must have had frequent intercourse with Him and after His Ascension, it was doubtless at His behest that she remained with the other women and the Apostles in the room where the Last Supper had been eaten, to await the coming of the Holy Ghost. With them she received the Holy Spirit, and she must have listened with great joy to the burning words which Peter, strengthened and enlightened by the Holy Ghost,

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spoke to the assembled Jews, so that on that occasion three thousand of them professed their faith in Christ.

Mary's work upon earth would seem to be ended now. Her Son had finished the work His Father had given Him to do and had entered into His glory. The Church He had founded to continue His work had been confirmed by the Holy Ghost. His Apostles, from being His timorous followers, were changed into His ardent lovers, who were not afraid of death or the demons of hell, and His teachings were spreading beyond the borders of Syria. Mary, it would seem, might well rejoin Her Son. But she did not. She remained on earth for fully fifteen years, dwelling in the house of John at Jerusalem, though she is said to have accompanied him to Ephesus and even to have died there. But the most reliable tradition ascribes her death to Jerusalem. She grew older but she did not age, for her sinless body was not subject to disease or death. She grew constantly in grace and sanctity and at last, in God's time, she fell asleep in the Lord.

The disciples laid her in a tomb in the olive garden of Gethsemani, the site of which is a place of devout pilgrimage. On the third day,

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so the tradition goes, they opened her sepulchre, to display her blessed body to the veneration of one of their number who had been absent from her deathbed, but it was no longer there, for her Divine Son had taken her to Himself where He sits at the right hand of His Father.

John had received her from Jesus and after he yielded her back to Him he had still many years to remain on earth and feel her loss. About sixty-four years after Christ's Ascension, after many years of unwearying labors for the Church, he was exiled by the Roman Emperor to the island of Patmos. There he wrote down the revelations that were given to him from heaven and that make up the Book of the Apocalypse. He was vouchsafed wonderful visions of Paradise and Christ in His glory, and he saw also "a woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." We are not obliged to recognize this woman as Mary, but there is something peculiarly appealing in the thought that John, who had stood with her on Calvary and who had for years cared tenderly for her, should in his advanced age be allowed to see her in the diadem wherewith her Son, his Friend, had crowned her.

PART II

CATHOLIC DEVOTION TO MARY

Blessed art thou, O Virgin Mary, who didst bear the Lord, the Creator of the World!

The devotion to Mary, which has always been such a beautiful feature of Catholic life, finds all the justification it requires in the inspired words of Mary herself: “Behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, because He that is mighty hath done great things to me.” She was to be called blessed because Almighty God had done great things to her, had made her worthy to be the Mother of His Son.

Her Divine Motherhood had procured for her graces beyond those bestowed upon any other child of Eve, had raised her to a position of supremacy among human creatures, and entitled her to reverence beyond that accorded to any other. Every mother shares in the esteem in which her son is held. We have had abundant evidence of this in the honor given to the mothers of those who fought in the Great War. When soldiers died without receiving public recognition

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of their heroism, their decorations were presented to their mothers. It was this instinct to transfer to the mother something of the glory achieved by the son, that made the woman in the crowd, desiring to express her admiration for Christ, exclaim: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the paps that gave thee suck!"

When Christ was dying on the Cross He showed a son's natural solicitude for His Mother, and one of the evidences of His love for John was to give him the care of her. Of John's love for Himself He was assured, and He knew that He could not lay on him a more joyful task than this care of His Mother. John received this dying bequest of his Friend as a most sacred charge, and thenceforth he "took her to his own."

Mary's position in John's household must have been one of the highest dignity and honor, and his reverence for her would naturally be shared by all the other Apostles and disciples, who in turn would communicate it eagerly to the new converts whom they won to belief in Jesus.

Belief in Christ spread with miraculous swiftness over the Roman Empire, but it was con-

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demned as a crime against the State, and those who professed it had to do so in secret. In Rome they had to assist at the sacred functions in dark underground cemeteries called catacombs. For three hundred years persecution after persecution was waged against them in an effort to exterminate them, but those who survived only gathered up lovingly the mutilated bodies of those who died for their faith and brought them to the catacombs for burial.

These dark passages under the city where their dead were buried (and in so many instances their dead were saints and martyrs), and where the Mass was said on stones covering their tombs, were as sacred to the early Christians as our loftiest cathedrals are to us. Consequently the walls are covered with inscriptions and symbols of their faith, among which, as we should naturally expect to be the case, are numerous representations of the Virgin Mother and her Divine Child. That in the catacomb of St. Priscilla has been pronounced by experts the most ancient painting of Our Lady yet discovered, and it is, moreover, of high artistic quality.

When in the year 312 the Emperor Constantine gave the Christians a legal right to freedom

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of worship, they were no longer obliged to meet in secrecy and darkness. They emerged from the catacombs and began everywhere to build churches in which to offer the Holy Sacrifice, and many of these were placed under the patronage of Mary. This subject is dealt with below, in the pages devoted to sanctuaries and pilgrimages.

In the first half of the fifth century Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, taught that Mary was the mother of Christ's human nature only, and that it was not lawful to speak of her as the Mother of God. For the condemnation of this heresy a general council was convened at Ephesus in 431, and besides procuring from the Church an official declaration of the true doctrine concerning Mary's position and the honor due to her, it was the occasion of a great public demonstration in her behalf. The people thronged the streets during the sessions of the Council, and when the condemnation of Nestorius was announced and Mary's claim to the title of *Theotokos* (God-bearer, Mother of God) was thus vindicated, they took up the word and, making it a shout of victory, went in procession through the streets.

Throughout this period Mary appears fre-

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quently in the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, in the sermons of bishops and priests, and with increasing prominence in the devotion of the faithful. She was praised as the one sinless perfect creature. Ecclesiastical writers considered that, as the coming of the Messias was foretold not only verbally but by means of historic personages who typified some aspect of His personality and His work and are called types, so Mary was foreshown in the same way by various women of the Old Testament. Thus her miraculous maternity was typified by Sara, the wife of Abraham, whose barrenness was made miraculously fruitful; her co-operation in the work of the Redemption was pre-figured by Mary, the sister of Moses, who was long associated in his work. Debbora, the prophetess, whose counsels brought about the deliverance of the nation from the Chanaanites; the heroic Judith, who slew the enemy of her people; Queen Esther, whose favor with the King averted the destruction of the Jews, were all pointed out as foreshadowings of her who, by the providence of God, was to co-operate in the work of redemption.

By the Middle Ages civilization at its best had

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become Christian. It was, in fact, designated by the title of Christendom. Not only were entire countries brought under the sway of Christ, but the lives of individual Christians were impregnated with faith. Religion reached the most intimate and sacred depths of the human heart, affected every human relation, influenced every activity, had its share in every avocation, and at the same time was the basis of every public function. By this time, among people living on such familiar terms with divine things, Mary was accorded her rightful place as the most tenderly loved and highly honored of creatures. It was as though John's household had been extended to embrace all men, and Mary held among them the place given to her by John; she was "their own."

Her feasts were kept with great pomp and splendor, her shrines, memorials of her power and kindness, were visited with loving devotion. The literature of the period abounds with legends concerning her which, if they are not true as to details, are evidence of the people's childlike trust in her. Scarcely a town in Christendom but had its church, erected under her patronage, and every church, whether dedicated to her or not,

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had its lady altar, as has every Catholic church to-day, and the larger churches had their lady chapels. On her statues and images the faithful delighted to bestow rich gifts, and they made her their heiress at their death. The day began with the *Mary Mass*, sung at early dawn, and ended with the *Salve* at night. Shrines in Mary's honor stood along the roadside, the flowers in the field were called by her name, "Mary gold," "Lady's mantle," "Virgin's bower," the field itself would be called "Mary's Meadow" and the wood "Lady's Grove." The portion of food set aside for the poor would be dedicated to her and called "Ladymeat," or "St. Mary's loaf." The region now known to us as the Baltic Provinces was once known as *Terra Mariæ*, "Mary's Country," and England as a nation delighted to call itself "Our Lady's Dower."

This very title, *Our Lady*, is an evidence of the change that had come upon the world, for these ages of faith were ages of chivalry. According to the pagan codes and even under the Jewish dispensation, woman had been regarded as a being of inferior degree, but in Mary all womankind was raised to a position of honor. A new standard was set up for the emulation of

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women, a standard of purity, meekness, dignity, modesty, exalted sanctity. Of women aspiring to such heights the knights of the Middle Ages were born, men who recognized in all women a kinship with Mary, who reverenced in them even a remote resemblance to her, and devoted their lives to the defence of what because of her they held above all price, woman's honor. Then for the first time the ideal, the perfect woman, was described by the term *lady*, meaning woman of exalted station and power, and Mary by common consent designated as *Our Lady*.

Recognition of Mary's greatness and reliance on her favor with her Divine Son naturally took the form of prayers in praise of her and appeals to her intercession. The "Hail Mary" suggests itself as the earliest of such prayers. The words of the angel's greeting to Mary were first used in the liturgy of the Church when, at the end of the sixth century, Pope Gregory the Great made them the Introit of the Mass for the first Sunday of Advent. But as a separate and popular, as distinguished from a liturgical devotion, the "Hail Mary" developed from the more lengthy devotion known as the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Little Office is so called to distinguish it from the Divine Office, to the daily recitation of which, as it is contained in the Roman Breviary, all clerics of the Latin Church are bound. The Divine Office consists of the Psalms of David, known as the Psalter, so arranged that certain Psalms shall be recited at specified times of the day. Interspersed with the Psalms are canticles, antiphons, hymns, versicles and lessons, according to the feast and the season. The Psalter had from the earliest times constituted the ordinary official prayer of the Church, and the division of the day into seven Hours for prayer was likewise a primitive custom, antedating even Christianity.

The Little Office follows the general lines of the Divine Office. When or under what circumstances it was composed is uncertain, but by the eighth century the Benedictine monks were obliged by their rule to recite its Hours after the Hours of the Divine Office. From the monasteries the Little Office spread to the people, and soon the Primer, or Book of Hours, as it was called, was the favorite book of devotion of all the people. Many copies were in circulation, and from the fact that from them children were

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taught to read, we derive our name of Primer for a first reading book. In many instances the costliest materials were used for its construction, and its pages were beautified with illuminations and miniatures, still regarded as artistic marvels.

The Psalms of the Little Office praise the greatness of God as shown forth in Mary, and its versicles and lessons apply to her many beautiful passages of Scripture, regarded as prophetic of her coming or as exemplifying her greatness. Of frequent recurrence among these are the words of the angel's salutation to Mary and those of Elizabeth's greeting. These words passed into popular use, and, independently of their place in the Little Office, were repeated many times over by way of salutation, the number being marked by genuflections and prostrations. The petition, "Holy Mary," was added at a much later date, as a result of the feeling that a true prayer should contain some such petition.

The devotion so dear to the hearts of Catholics, now called the Rosary, but long known as Our Lady's Psalter, had its origin in this repetition of Hail Marys, which held a particular appeal for those who were unable to read the Psalms of the Little Office. The Rosary, to use the

words of the Roman Breviary, is “a certain form of prayer wherein we say fifteen decades or tens of Hail Marys, with an Our Father between each ten, while at each of these fifteen decades we recall successively in pious meditation one of the mysteries of our Redemption.”

The earliest form of the Rosary was one hundred and fifty Hail Marys, divided for convenience sake, as were the Psalms for which they were substituted, into three “fifties.” The use of strings of beads for counting them was a natural expedient for keeping track of vocal prayers, and took the place of the genuflections already referred to. The beads themselves, from being used to count Our Fathers said instead of psalms, were long called “paternosters.” The large beads on which the Our Fathers are now said were first used in honor of the Five Wounds of Christ.

Meditation on the mysteries, which is the very essence of the devotion as we now have it, seems to have been introduced under Carthusian influence, and at first took the form of clauses added after the word “Jesus,” recalling Mary’s connexion with some event of His life.

In the hands of St. Dominic, to whom has been

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attributed the institution of the Rosary, it became a powerful weapon against the Albigensian heretics of the south of France, who were like the Nihilists or Anarchists of our times. By its means he converted many who had resisted the appeals of learned and eloquent preachers. Alanus de Rupe, a Dominican who lived in the fifteenth century, gave his life to propagating the devotion of the Rosary, its spread being largely accomplished by the Rosary confraternities established by him, the first of which was founded at Cologne in 1475. Before the end of the century they had spread over Europe and were enriched by the popes with many indulgences and privileges which have subsequently been increased. The wide diffusion of the devotion in modern times is chiefly due to the members of the Dominican Order.

The Creed became at an early date the introductory prayer to the Rosary, the Salve Regina was introduced by the Rosary confraternities, and the Glory be to the Father at the end of each decade is an addition of very recent times, and was made by analogy with the Psalms in the Office.

The Antiphons of the Blessed Virgin are four

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hymns in Mary's honor, one of which is sung at the end of Divine Office and of the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary; according to the season of the year. St. Bonaventure, general of the Franciscan Order, is said to have given them this place in the liturgy about 1274. There are four of these antiphons or anthems, known by their first words in Latin, as the "Alma Redemptoris Mater," the "Ave Regina Cœlorum," the "Regina Coeli," and the "Salve Regina."

The "Alma Redemptoris" is sung between the first Sunday of Advent and the feast of the Purification. The authorship is not known with certainty, but it has been ascribed to Hermann the Lame, a monk of the Benedictine Abbey of Reichenau, who died in 1054. The anthem has always been extremely popular, apart from its place in the liturgy, as is evident from Chaucer's "Prioresses Tale."

ALMA REDEMPTORIS

Maiden! Mother of Him Who redeemed us, thou that remainest,
Heaven's open gate, and the Star of the Sea, come,
succor the fallen!
Fallen indeed we are, but fain would rise by they succor.

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Thou that beyond nature's course, hast borne in time
the Eternal;
Thou that a Virgin before, in, and after that childbirth
abidest,
From the Archangel's lips the quickening message
receiving,
Mother of Jesus and us, turn thine eyes of mercy on
sinners.

The "Ave Regina" is sung from the feast of the Purification to Holy Thursday exclusively. It salutes Mary as the Queen of Heaven, the Dawn of Salvation. Its authorship is unknown, but it is believed to be of monastic origin.

AVE REGINA

Hail, O Mary, Queen of heaven,
Queen of Angel worlds on high,
Hail, O Rod to Jesse given,
Blessed Portal of the sky,
Hail, O Lady, bright and glorious,
Clothed in beauty, pure and true,
Virgin! o'er sin's stain victorious,
Sinners for thy succor sue.

The "Regina Cœli" is the anthem for the Paschal season. The authorship is sometimes attributed to St. Gregory the Great. There is a legend which relates that in 596 St. Gregory

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ordered a procession to be held at Easter time for the cessation of a pestilence which was then ravaging Rome. As he walked at the head of his clergy from the church of Ara Cœli past the castle of Hadrian, bearing a picture of Our Lady said to have been painted by St. Luke, he heard angelic voices singing the first three versicles of the “Regina Cœli,” whereupon he replied in a loud voice: “Ora pro nobis Deum, Alleluia.” Immediately he beheld above the castle a radiant angel, who put back his sword into its scabbard, and from that time the pestilence ceased. Thereafter the castle was called Sant’ Angelo.

REGINA CŒLI

Rejoice! rejoice! thou Queen of Heaven. Alleluia.
For He that thee for Son was given, Alleluia.
As He promised is arisen, Alleluia.
Mother, pray to Him for us, Alleluia.
O Virgin Mary, be glad and rejoice, Alleluia.
For the Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia.

The “*Salve Regina*,” the most famous of these anthems, is said from Trinity Sunday until Advent. It is now generally considered to have been composed by Hermann the Lame, though the authorship has been attributed to St. Bernard

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of Clairvaux. Another tradition relates that while legate in Germany St. Bernard added by inspiration the invocations *O clemens*, *O pia*, *O dulcis virgo Maria*, when he heard the anthem chanted in the cathedral of Speyer as he entered it in procession on Christmas Eve. The pavement of the cathedral is marked with three plates, showing where the saint genuflected at each invocation.

The "Salve Regina" was always in great favor as a processional chant. The Dominicans introduced it as a special chant at Compline, and this led to its wide popularity as a distinct evening service, held in honor of Our Lady by the members of trade guilds and confraternities. To this service the general name *Salve* was given, and the service is believed to have been the origin of our Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, which in French is called *Salut*. The "Salve Regina" is regarded as the special hymn of sailors.

SALVE REGINA

Hail, Queen, Mother of mercy! Hail, our life, our sweetness, and our hope! To thee we cry, the banished sons of Eve. Toward thee we sigh, weeping and groaning in this vale of tears. Ah, then, thou our Advocate,

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turn on us those merciful eyes of thine! And, after this our exile, show to us Jesus, the blessed fruit of thy womb. O most merciful, O most gracious, O most sweet Virgin Mary!

Another hymn to Our Lady which occurs in both the Divine Office and the Little Office is the "Ave Maris Stella" (Hail, Star of the Sea). Its author is unknown, though incorrectly said to be St. Bernard.

AVE MARIS STELLA

Hail, thou Star-of-Ocean,
Portal of the sky,
Ever-Virgin Mother
Of the Lord Most High!

Oh, by Gabriel's AVE
Uttered long ago,
EVA'S name reversing,
'Stablish peace below!

Break the captive's fetters—
Light on blindness pour—
All our ills expelling,
Every bliss implore—

Show thyself a Mother—
Offer Him our sighs,
Who, for us Incarnate,
Did not thee despise.

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Virgin of all virgins!
To thy shelter take us—
Gentlest of the gentle!
Chaste and gentle make us.

Still as on we journey,
Help our weak endeavor,
Till with thee and Jesus,
We rejoice forever.

Through the highest heaven
To the Almighty Three,
Father, Son, and Spirit,
One same glory be.

The “Quem terra, pontus, sidera” is an ancient hymn in honor of the Blessed Virgin, ascribed to Venantius Fortunatus, a sixth century poet of great renown. The Roman Breviary divides it into two parts, the second beginning “O gloriosa virginum,” both being said throughout the year in the Divine Office and the Little Office.

QUEM TERRA PONTUS SIDERA

The God Whom earth, and sea, and sky,
Adore, and laud, and magnify,
Who o'er their threefold fabric reigns,
The Virgin's spotless womb contains.

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The God, Whose will by moon and sun,
And all things in due course is done,
Is borne upon a maiden's breast,
By fullest heavenly grace possessed.
How blest that Mother in whose shrine
The great Artificer Divine,
Whose hand contains the earth and sky,
Vouchsafed, as in His ark, to lie!
Blest, in the message Gabriel brought;
Blest, by the work the Spirit wrought;
From whom the great Desire of earth
Took human Flesh and human birth.
All honor, laud, and glory be,
O Jesu, Virgin-born, to Thee!
All glory, as is ever meet,
To Father and to Paraclete.

O GLORIOSA VIRGINUM

O Glorious Virgin, ever blest,
All daughters of mankind above,
Who gavest nurture from thy breast,
To God, with pure maternal love.
What we had lost through sinful Eve
The Blossom sprung from thee restores,
And, granting bliss to souls that grieve,
Unbars the everlasting doors.
O Gate, through which hath passed the King!
O Hall, whence light shone through the gloom!
The ransomed nations praise and sing
The Offspring of thy virgin womb!

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Praise from mankind and heaven's host,
To Jesus of a Virgin sprung,
To Father and to Holy Ghost,
Be equal glory ever sung.

One of the oldest forms of popular devotion to Mary is that known as the Angelus. It is said in honor of the Incarnation three times a day at the ringing of a bell, except during the Easter season, when the "Regina Coeli" is said instead, and consists of a triple recitation of the Hail Mary, each preceded by a versicle from Scripture, followed by a concluding versicle and a prayer.

THE ANGELUS

The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.
And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.
Hail Mary, etc.
Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
Be it done unto me according to thy word.
Hail Mary, etc.
And the Word was made Flesh
And dwelt amongst us.
Hail Mary, etc.
Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

It had its origin in the monastic custom of reciting a triple prayer in honor of the Trinity after Compline, the last Hour of the Divine Office, the prayer being accompanied by a ringing of the bell as a signal to those within and without that the monastery was about to be closed for the night and also as an invitation to the faithful to join in this devotion. Later, the town churches took up this custom of ringing the bell as a means of notifying the people to retire to their houses and to say their prayers. This developed into the curfew bell, rung for a much longer period of time, sometimes amounting to an hour. In Rome, the evening Angelus bell is a sign for clerical students and the clergy generally to return to their homes.

In 1263 St. Bonaventure ordered that at the ringing of the bell after Compline all the monks in Franciscan houses should recite the Hail Mary

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thrice, the people likewise being invited to say the prayer. By degrees the hour of the Hail Mary was anticipated and that of curfew retarded. The present fashion of ringing the Angelus bell is a combination of the triple ringing for the Hail Mary and the prolonged ringing for the curfew.

At first there was only the evening Angelus. The morning devotion developed separately from a triple prayer recited in monasteries at break of day. The midday Angelus grew out of a devotion in honor of the Passion, which consisted of the recitation of Our Fathers and later of Our Fathers and Hail Marys. In medieval England the Angelus bell was called the Gabriel bell and in Germany the peace bell. The Angelus did not take its present form until the beginning of the sixteenth century.

A prayer which is regarded as of ancient origin, inasmuch as its authorship is attributed to St. Bernard, is that known as the "Memorare," the "Remember," and very generally as the "Prayer of St. Bernard," although it cannot be found literally in St. Bernard's works. The error

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is due to a confusion with Claude Bernard, a devout French priest who on the day of his ordination distributed his large fortune to the poor and thenceforth devoted himself to their service and to that of condemned criminals. He was known as "the poor priest." He was untiring in his efforts to spread devotion to Mary, making use of this prayer which he had learned from his father, and to the recitation of which he attributed his own miraculous cure. It is a section of a longer prayer to Our Lady which has been found in old prayer books.

The "Stabat Mater Dolorosa," which is used as the Sequence of the Mass on both feasts of Our Lady's Sorrows, is commonly attributed to Jacopone da Todi, a fourteenth century Franciscan poet. It is considered the most pathetic of medieval poems, and is called "the queen of sequences."

STABAT MATER DOLOROSA

At the Cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last;
Through her heart His sorrow sharing,
All His bitter anguish hearing,
Lo! the piercing sword had passed!

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O, how sad, and sore distressed,
Now was she, that Mother Blessèd
 Of the Sole-Begotten One;
Woe-begone, with heart's prostration,
Mother meek, the bitter Passion
 Saw she of her glorious Son.
Who could mark, from tears refraining,
Christ's dear Mother uncomplaining,
 In so great a sorrow bowed?
Who, unmoved, behold her languish
Underneath His Cross of anguish,
 'Mid the fierce unpitying crowd?
For His people's sins rejected,
She her Jesus, unprotected,
 Saw with thorns, with scourges rent;
Saw her Son from judgment taken,
Her Beloved in death forsaken,
 Till His spirit forth He sent.
Fount of love and holy sorrow,
Mother! may my spirit borrow
 Somewhat of thy woe profound;
Unto Christ, with pure emotion,
Raise my contrite heart's devotion,
 Love to read in every Wound.
Those five Wounds on Jesus smitten,
Mother! in my heart be written,
 Deep as in thine own they be;
Thou, my Savior's Cross who bearest,
Thou, thy Son's rebuke who sharest,
 Let me share them both with thee!

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In the Passion of my Maker
Be my sinful soul partaker,
Weep till death, and weep with thee;
Mine with thee be that sad station,
There to watch the great Salvation
Wrought upon the atoning Tree.

Virgin, thou, of virgins fairest,
May the bitter woe thou bearest
Make on me impression deep;
Thus Christ's dying may I carry,
With Him in His Passion tarry,
And his Wounds in memory keep.

May His Wounds transfix me wholly,
May His Cross and Life-Blood holy
Ebriate my heart and mind;
Thus inflamed with pure affection,
In the Virgin's Son protection
May I at the Judgment find.

When in death my limbs are failing
Let Thy Mother's prayer prevailing
Lift me, Jesus! to Thy throne;
To my parting soul be given
Entrance through the gate of heaven;
There confess me for Thine own!

MARY'S FEASTS

The day of Christ's birth and that of His manifestation to the Gentiles, called Epiphany, were kept sacred by Christians from the beginning. The anniversary of a martyr's death was observed not as a day of mourning but as a glorious festival. This, rather than the day of his coming into the world, was kept holy and called his "birthday." Over the one lay the shadow of Adam's sin, and over the other the brightness of eternal life, to which he had passed through death.

So it would naturally be with the commemoration of the death of Mary, which was the first of her feasts to be observed. It was called the feast of the Passing, the Dormition, the Falling Asleep of the Mother of God, and corresponded to the modern feast of her Assumption, celebrated on August 15th. Its observance was very general in the East at an early date, and probably began at Jerusalem, where her tomb was preserved and venerated. It is now the principal feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and ranks as a holy day of obligation with a vigil. It is called 'Lady Day in Harvest to distinguish it from the feast of the Annunciation.

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Mary's birth, as well as that of John the Baptist, who had been sanctified in his mother's womb, had always been recognized as holy, and so the feast of her nativity was next in order of establishment. Its observance on September 8th is practically universal, though the reason for choosing this date is unknown. Its observance was a preliminary stage in the establishment of the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

This feast of her Immaculate Conception, like all other great feasts of Mary, originated in the East. It was based on a legendary account according to which, as in the case of John the Baptist, an angel announced Mary's birth to her parents, and the object of the feast, called the Conception of St. Anne, was not so much Mary's sinless conception, as this announcement that the barrenness of St. Anne was to be brought miraculously to an end. In the course of time this feast became that of the Immaculate Conception of Mary as we now celebrate it on December 8th.

The earliest evidence of it in the Western Church is in the Irish calendars of the eighth century, though its appearance here does not necessarily mean that it was observed in the churches, but only recorded as an historical event.

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Its public celebration in England, which had been inaugurated by the Saxon monks, was interrupted for a time when England was conquered by the Normans, but soon restored.

Its re-establishment is partly legendary in character, being attributed to a vision accorded to Helsin, Abbot of Ramsey, when he was commissioned to establish at his monastery, in thanksgiving for his preservation from shipwreck, the feast of Mary's Immaculate Conception. This was about 1070. St. Anselm, Abbot of Bury St. Edmunds, established the feast in that monastery in 1121, and was instrumental in its establishment in other monasteries, whence it spread to the whole of England. From England it spread to Normandy, where it was celebrated with such splendor that it was known throughout Europe as "the Feast of the Norman Nation."

The more general observance of the feast was largely due to the Franciscans, who made themselves the champions of the doctrine it celebrated, and finally in 1476 Pope Sixtus IV adopted the feast for the entire Latin Church. In 1708 Clement XI made it a holy day of obligation and in 1879 Leo XIII raised it to a first class feast with a vigil. Mary was chosen patroness of the

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United States, under the title of her Immaculate Conception, by the Council of Baltimore in 1846, and in 1854 the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed an article of faith by Pius IX.

The feast of the Annunciation has been universally celebrated, at least since the seventh century. It is assigned to March 25th, which was regarded as the actual date of Christ's death, the early opinion being that the creation of the world and Adam's fall having taken place in the Spring season, Christ's coming and His death fittingly took place then also. In the East the feast of the Annunciation has always been observed as a feast of Christ rather than of His Mother. In the Latin Church, though no longer universally a holy day of obligation, it is a first class feast which, if it falls within Holy Week or Easter week, is transferred to the Monday after the octave of Easter. In Catholic England it was called Lady Day, and in Germany, Our Lady in Lent.

The feast of the Purification of Mary, called Candlemas Day, and now assigned to February 2, was observed primarily as that of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple and as such the ob-

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servance antedates even the feast of the Assumption. The celebration of the feast is distinguished by the blessing of the candles to be used throughout the year in the services of the Church and by a procession in which the participants carry lighted candles. In the Middle Ages it was customary for the procession to leave the church and pass through the surrounding cemetery. The Canticle of Simeon, uttered as he received into his arms "the Light to the revelation of the Gentiles," is chanted during the procession, the ceremony representing the coming of Christ, the Light of the world, into His Temple. The ceremony of the churhing of women was instituted in honor of Mary's Purification.

At the instance of St. Bonaventure, the feast of the Visitation on July 2, commemorating Mary's visit to Elizabeth, was introduced into the Franciscan Breviary in 1263. It was made universal by Urban VI in the hope that Mary by her prayers would heal the schism at that time dividing the Church.

The feast of her Presentation in the Temple by her parents originated in the East, where it has been observed since an early age. It was introduced into the Western Church in 1372

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through the influence of a French nobleman who had held a diplomatic post in the East. The date is November 21.

On January 23 is kept the feast of Mary's Espousals to Joseph. It was first granted to the nuns of the Annunciation in 1517, and subsequently to other religious orders. Various dioceses in turn petitioned for its observance. Although it has never been officially extended to the whole Church its observance is practically universal.

The feast of the Holy Name of Mary was instituted in Spain in 1513. It was extended to the universal Church by Innocent XI in 1683, in gratitude for the defeat of the Turks by Sobieski on September 12th of that year. It was for a time observed on the Sunday after the feast of Mary's nativity, but is now permanently assigned to September 12th.

There are two feasts commemorating the Sorrows of Mary, one on September 18th and one on the Friday in Passontide. The first originated in Germany in 1413 and was instituted by way of expiating the impiety of certain heretics who were destroying sacred images. It spread to other countries and was already widely ob-

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served when in 1727 Benedict XIII extended it to the entire Latin Church, giving it the title of the Seven Dolors. It had been previously observed in various places as the Compassion, the Mourning, the Transfixion of Mary, and as Our Lady of Pity.

The second feast was granted in 1668 to the Servite Order (Servants of Mary), their principal devotion being the compassionating of her sorrows, the sharpness of her grief on the following occasions being especially commemorated: the prophesying of Simeon, the flight into Egypt, the loss of the Holy Child, her meeting with her Son on the road to Calvary, while she stood beneath the Cross, His taking down from the Cross and His burial. The special title for Mary in her grief is *Mater Dolorosa*, or *Addolorata*. Her loneliness and desolation on Holy Saturday, when Christ's Body lay in the tomb are commemorated in Spain under the title "Our Lady of Solitude." On both feasts of the Seven Dolors the "Stabat Mater Dolorosa" is used as the Sequence of the Mass, and also in the Office.

The feast of the Holy Rosary, observed on the first Sunday of October, but no longer as a first class feast, was instituted by Gregory XIII in

1573 at the request of the Dominican Order. Prior to that time the Mass of the day contained a commemoration of the Rosary, by authorization of Pius V in thanksgiving for the Christian victory over the Turks at the battle of Lepanto, obtained, it was believed, through the processions of the Rosary confraternities at Rome. A plenary indulgence is granted on this feast in every church where the Rosary confraternity has been erected, on the occasion of every visit to the church.

The second Sunday of October is dedicated to the Maternity of Mary and the third to her Purity. The entire month is devoted to her honor under the title of Our Lady of the Rosary, but it is the month of May that is regarded in a particular manner as Mary's month. From pre-Christian times it was customary to hold a May festival in honor of the coming of Spring and the entire month was regarded as an appropriate time for lovers to give evidence of their affection, which they did through the presentation of May garlands. The spring festival included the setting up of a May tree or bough, about which the people danced, and the crowning of a Queen of the May. It was Blessed Henry Suso a German

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Dominican of the fourteenth century, who first directed these ceremonies to Our Lady's honor.

Several centuries later a devout priest, Father Annibale Dionisi, compiled a little book of devotion, the object of which was to dedicate an entire month, day by day, to Mary. The first edition was issued in 1724, and a great many such books followed. At first there was no question of any particular month, but very soon the devotion was connected with the month of May, which was being publicly observed in Italy in 1739, and is now pre-eminently Mary's month.

The dedication of Saturday to Mary's special honor is of very ancient origin.

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SHRINES AND PILGRIMAGES

As has already been pointed out, the worship of the early Christians was carried on in catacombs, private dwellings and other places where secrecy could be observed. When it became possible to erect a building for the express purpose of divine worship it was called the House of God or the House of Prayer. After the Peace of the Church such edifices were multiplied, and in most cases the scenes of martyrdom were naturally chosen as their sites. In many such instances the martyr's relics were preserved there, and the church dedicated to God under his patronage.

Two cities have laid claim to the honor of possessing the first church under the patronage of the Mother of God, Jerusalem and Ephesus. The tomb of the Blessed Virgin in the Garden of Gethsemani at Jerusalem was from the earliest times a place of reverent pilgrimage. The Church of the Assumption on this spot is subterranean and dates from the fourth or fifth century. The tomb itself was separated by the Christians from the solid rock in which it had been hollowed and forms a distinct edifice, the outer and inner walls of which are covered over with tapestry. Along the east wall of the in-

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terior stretches a kind of shelf, about four feet from the ground, on which was laid the untainted body of God's Mother.

There is said to have been a church under Mary's patronage at Ephesus at the time of the Council of 431, but the tradition is doubtful. As a memorial of this council, however, Pope Sixtus III dedicated to Mary the great Liberian Basilica on the Esquiline Hill in Rome, since known as St. Mary Major. It is so called because it ranks before all the churches of Our Lady in Rome.

The legendary account of its origin relates that a Roman patrician who owned the land on which the basilica stands, having no children, agreed with his wife to bestow their property upon Mary. They besought her to give them some token of her wishes as to its disposal, and on a certain night both received in sleep the behest to build a church in her honor on the Esquiline at the place which they should find the next morning covered with snow. Hastening to inform the pope of what had transpired, they found that Liberius had in the same manner received a command to co-operate with them. Accompanied by clergy and people, Pope Liberius went to the Esquiline, and found a portion of the ground covered with

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snow, a miraculous occurrence at that season, when the Roman heat is most intense.

The basilica was begun in 358 and completed in 360. It was enlarged and beautified by Pope Sixtus III, as a memorial of the vindication of Mary's dignity as Mother of God. Because of this legend, St. Mary Major's is likewise known as Our Lady of the Snow (*Sancta Maria ad Nives*), and the feast of Mary under this title is celebrated on August 5, the traditional date of the miracle. In the basilica itself the legend of the snow is commemorated by a shower of white rose leaves from the balcony of one of the chapels.

The church now preserves relics of the crib, said to have been brought from the Holy Land during the pontificate of Pope Theodore. For this reason it is also called Our Lady of the Manger and *Sancta Maria ad Præsepe*, from the Latin word for crib.

The Church of *Sancta Maria Antiqua* is considered to rival St. Mary Major's in antiquity.

St. Pulcheria, Empress of Constantinople, who supported the opponents of the Nestorian heresy, built at Constantinople three churches in honor of the Mother of God, in one of which, that in

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the quarter of the Blachernæ, were deposited relics said to be the grave-clothes of Mary. They were sent to Pulcheria's husband, the Emperor Marcian, by Juvenal, Bishop of Jerusalem.

Many traditions ascribe even to Apostolic times the dedication of churches to Mary. St. Peter is said to have built in her honor a church at Tortosa, Syria, when he was on his way to Antioch. In the Middle Ages this shrine was the object of a famous pilgrimage. St. John placed under her patronage the church at Lydda, St. Barnabas, that of Milan, while the original shrine of Our Lady of the Pillar, at Saragossa, Spain, is said to have been built by St. James as a result of a command of the Blessed Virgin, who appeared to him as he knelt in prayer on the banks of the Ebro. The miraculous image here enshrined is the object of the most fervent devotion of the people of the Iberian peninsula, in which area alone there are more than five hundred and fifty shrines in honor of Mary.

The Christian Faith was carried to Gaul, which, roughly speaking, corresponds to modern France, by Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary. According to tradition, at the place where they landed on the shore of Provence, they set up

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an altar of baked clay, placing it under Mary's patronage, and upon it the Holy Sacrifice was offered for the first time on French soil. As Our Lady of the Sea this shrine has had an annual attendance (on May 25) of 20,000 pilgrims down to modern times.

France proved such fertile ground for the seed of devotion to the Mother of God that a list of her shrines in that country contains over 2000 entries. Of these the most important are Notre Dame de Fourvières, at Lyons, Notre Dame de Chartres, Notre Dame de Boulogne, Notre Dame de Liesse, and the great shrine at Lourdes, famous the world over for its astounding miracles.

Lyons was originally a Roman city which received the Faith from St. Pothinus, a disciple of St. Polycarp, who had in turn conversed with many who had seen Christ during His earthly life. St. Pothinus brought with him to Lyons an image of Our Lady, which he placed in a crypt where it is still to be seen, beneath the church of St. Nazaire. The shrine of Our Lady of Fourvières, however, was not established until 840, when the people erected it on the site of the ancient Roman Forum (whence it derives its

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name), then fallen to ruins. The church was enlarged in the twelfth century with material taken from these ruins. Destroyed during the wars of religion, it was subsequently restored and survived the Revolution.

The people of Lyons have on several occasions attributed their deliverance from pestilence to Our Lady of Fourvières. It was here that the feast of the Immaculate Conception was first solemnized on French soil. When the feast of Mary's Nativity had been decreed at the General Council of Lyons in 1245, it was made the patronal feast of Notre Dame de Fourvières and celebrated annually with great splendor.

The cathedral of Chartres, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, is regarded as the most beautiful church in the world. It is the delight of artists and poets, who vie with one another in describing its many glories, which a recent writer has summed up in the phrase, "the Paschal joy of Chartres." In its perfection it expresses the faith of the people of the Middle Ages.

According to legend, when the Christian missionaries came to this region, they found preserved in a grotto and venerated by the Druids, the figure of a woman, seated, with a child upon

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her knee, and below the inscription: "To the virgin who shall bear a Child." This was considered to be a remnant of the tradition existing among the Gentiles concerning the coming of a Redeemer, and the missionaries had no difficulty in winning to Christianity people who were in expectation of the news they brought. The statue became an object of Christian veneration under the title Our Lady Underground, and during the ages of faith throngs of pilgrims flocked to the crypt beneath the cathedral of Chartres. In the ninth century Charles the Bald bestowed upon the cathedral a veil said to have been that of Our Lady.

In 1070 the old cathedral was destroyed by fire and the present magnificent structure is the result not only of the generous alms but of the personal labors of people of all stations. Men and women, noble and peasant, sometimes in hundreds, did not disdain to harness themselves to the carts in which the massive stones were drawn, and all this was accomplished in the reverent silence which characterized the building of Solomon's Temple. Among the countless evidences of love which hang near this shrine, the wampum belt of sea-shells sent by the Abenaki Indians of Maryland

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has a particular appeal. It is inscribed: "To the Virgin Mother her most devoted Abenakis."

The origin of Our Lady's shrine at Boulogne-sur-mer, a town at the mouth of the River Liane, on the Channel, is likewise legendary. The statue is said to have come to port on a mysterious ship, while at the same time the people assembled for prayer in the little church on the hilltop beheld an apparition of Our Lady, who told them of the ship's arrival and directed that the statue be set up for veneration in that place. The shrine acquired such renown that in the Middle Ages a pilgrimage to Notre Dame de Boulogne was often enjoined by sentence of the lay tribunals of France. When Boulogne was besieged by the English under Henry VIII the sanctuary was made the target for their guns, and when the city was captured the miraculous image was carried to England. It was recovered, to be captured by the Calvinists in the wars of religion, but after forty years it was again recovered unhurt, despite many attempts on the part of the heretics to destroy it. However, only a hand survived the excesses of the Revolution and the modern statue was made as faithful a copy as possible of that destroyed. The Archconfraternity of Our Lady of

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Compassion was established at this shrine to pray for the return of England to the Catholic Faith.

Legendary, also, is the origin of the shrine of Notre Dame de Liesse in the diocese of Soissons, but the clearly established miracles which have taken place there obtained for it a popularity that has been surpassed only by that of Lourdes. Louis XIV came in person to place the kingdom of France under the patronage of Notre Dame de Liesse. Cities vied with one another in enriching it with gifts and an annual concourse of 50,000 came thither from incredible distances.

The story of Lourdes is too well known to require repetition in detail. Here there is no question of legend or remote antiquity. On February 11, 1858, Bernadette Soubiroux, a fourteen-year-old peasant girl, saw in the hollow of a rock called Massabielle the figure of God's Mother. Between that date and July 16, the child saw her eighteen times. Once at Mary's direction she loosened the soil and a fountain gushed forth which continues in great abundance to this day and provides the miraculously endowed waters of the bathing pools. Again Our Lady pointed out the spot where she wished a chapel built and expressed the

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desire that it be visited by pilgrims. A vast basilica now stands at the foot of the rock where Mary set her holy feet and said: "I am the Immaculate Conception." More than 4000 cures took place at Lourdes within the first fifty years of the pilgrimage. There is a bureau of physicians for examining the authenticity of the cures, which are acknowledged to be beyond the power of natural forces and due only to Divine intervention. It is estimated that more than a million travellers come annually to Lourdes. In this favored spot, where the very air is redolent of the supernatural, the great ones of the earth are happy to act as litter-bearers to the helpless sufferers who come to seek the help of God's Mother and ours.

At Oostacker in Belgium is a shrine which is regarded as the daughter of Lourdes, in imitation of which it is built. The pool contains water from Massabielle and a number of miracles have been performed there.

At La Salette, in the diocese of Grenoble, Mary is said to have appeared to two shepherd children, under circumstances which aroused heated controversy that has been silenced by the explicit command of the Holy See.

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The basilica of Loretto, in the diocese of Recanati, Italy, enshrining what is believed to be the Holy House in which Gabriel sought out Mary and in which the Word was made Flesh, ranks foremost of all the sanctuaries of Mary in the world. The so-called *santa casa* stands beneath the dome of the great church encased in splendidly sculptured marble. Within the little house, behind the altar, stands the image of Our Lady of Loretto. Upon the eastern wall of the enclosure is an inscription, in part as follows:

“Here the Most Holy Mary, Mother of God, was born; here she was saluted by the Angel; here the Eternal Word of God was made flesh. Angels transferred this habitation first from Palestine to Tersatto in Illyria, in the year of salvation 1291, Nicholas IV being then Sovereign Pontiff. Three years afterwards, in the commencement of the pontificate of Boniface VIII, it was transferred into Picenum, near to Recanati city, and placed by the ministry of Angels in the wood of this hill; where, having changed its place three times within the space of a year, it at length rested by God’s will three hundred years ago.”

On the reredos of the altar within is a Latin inscription which translated runs: “Here the

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Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us."

The devotion to Mary known as the Litany of Loretto takes its name from this sanctuary, though whether or not it originated here is a matter of dispute. Litanies were used from the earliest times in the services of the Church, being especially employed in the religious processions, called *litanies*, which preluded these services. The oldest form of a litany to Mary is said to exist in an Irish MS. dating from the fourteenth century. The earliest litanies were lengthy and involved, but the simple form now in use had become customary at Loretto by the end of the fifteenth century. It was introduced into the basilica of St. Mary Major in 1597 and is now in general use throughout the world. The litany of Loretto is one of the five litanies approved for public recitation.

Other Italian shrines of Mary are at Genezzano, where the famous picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel is venerated, Grottaferrata, a Greek monastery said to have been built at the express direction of Our Lady and deriving its name from its Madonna, miraculously found in a grotto; Messina, which at one time possessed eighty-seven images of Mary, all objects of pilgrimage; Mantua, where, under the title of Our

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Lady of Grace, an image of Mary attributed to St. Luke is honored, and the picturesque mountain shrine of Cannetto in the Abruzzi.

In pre-Reformation England there were shrines of Our Lady at Canterbury, Glastonbury, where, owing to the costliness of the gifts, her chapel was called the Silver Chapel, Coventry, Ely, Ipswich, Worcester, Lincoln, Tewkesbury, and, greatest of all, Walsingham. Here in 1060 a little chapel had been built in imitation of the Holy House, then at Tersatto in Illyria, and within it a wooden image of the Mother and Child attracted the faithful in such throngs that the Milky Way was believed to point the pilgrims' path to what was called the Holy Land of Walsingham. During the suppression of the monasteries under Henry VIII, who some years previous had visited the shrine barefoot, the image of Our Lady of Walsingham was brought to London and publicly burnt. The beautiful "Lament for Walsingham" was probably written shortly after this and shows how dear to the people was the violated sanctuary:

Level, level with the ground
The towers do lie,
Which, with their golden, glittering tops,
Pierced once the sky.

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Where were gates no gates are now:

The way unknown.

Where the press of peers did pass

While far her fame was blown,

Owls do shriek where the sweetest hymns

Lately were sung

Toads and serpents hold their dens

Where the palmers did throng.

Weep, weep, O Walsingham,

Whose days are nights

Blessings turned to blasphemies,

Holy deeds to despites;

Sin is where Our Lady sate:

Heaven is turned to hell:

Satan sits where our Lord did sway—

Walsingham, oh, farewell.

The chief shrines of Our Lady in Ireland were at Dublin (St. Mary's Abbey), Muckross, Navan, Youghal and Trim, the two last-named being the most renowned. St. Mary's Abbey at Trim, County Meath, was founded by St. Patrick in 432, his nephew, Loman, being placed at the head of it. The origin of the shrine is lost in remote ages, the first mention of it in 1415 showing that a miraculous image of Our Lady in the abbey church had long been the object of pilgrimage. During the centuries when the country was rav-

aged by wars between the native Irish and the invading Saxons the pilgrims to Trim were so protected by law that they journeyed in perfect safety. When the storm of the Reformation broke upon Ireland the miraculous statue of Our Lady of Trim shared the fate of that of Walsingham, being publicly burnt.

The shrine of Mary of the Graces at Youghal in the diocese of Cloyne was not so ancient as that of Trim, but the renown of its miracles justified its title and brought throngs of pilgrims to Mary's feet. - The image, which is in carved ivory, about three inches high, of fifteenth century Italian workmanship, is said to have drifted ashore enclosed in a log of wood and its presence to have been discovered by the miracles wrought through its agency. It was set up in the Dominican priory, where it remained until the monastery was dissolved and bestowed upon Sir Walter Raleigh. When the friars were expelled from the country in 1698 they entrusted the image to the custody of a Catholic gentleman, to have it restored in the following century, when they were able to return to Youghal. It is now in the Dominican church of St. Mary, Cork.

In Ireland, however, where the ages of faith

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have never come to an end, the entire country may be said to be a shrine of Mary. The fire that Patrick kindled on the Hill of Slane has not only never flickered or gone out, but with the centuries it has only gained in intensity. The Faith took root in Ireland without persecution or bloodshed, but it has been kept only at the price of a prolonged martyrdom, and the Irish love for Mary has had no small share in their perseverance.

When the Irish received Christ they received His Mother, even as John received her, and the Two have never been separated in their hearts. "God and Mary save you," is their greeting to one another, "God and Mary go with you," their farewell, "My soul to God and Mary," pray the dying in their last hour, "May God and His Mother protect you and may you never know want," is the beggar's blessing.

Here as elsewhere she has her churches and her holy wells, but here every house may be called her sanctuary. Every home has an altar in her honor, and from innumerable Irish hearths through the innumerable years has gone up night after night the sound of the rosary, the "blessed beads." The Irish beads are worn thin from use.

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“Aye, I’m at the beads,” said an old woman to the author of “Down West,” “They’re me whole dependence, till sometimes I do wonder if it’s not too free I’m makin,’ takin’ the attention of the Blessed Mother so often from her Son.”

Every church has its angelus bell, and at its sound all activity ceases; the men at work in the fields, the women in the house, the children at their play, fall on their knees and greet Mary with Gabriel’s greeting. “Mary of the Graces” is invoked at rising and on going to rest, on sitting down to meals and when covering the fire for the night. Children are lulled to sleep to the sound of her name and committed to the protection of her “mantle of blue.”

All the poetry and tenderness of the Celtic nature are infused into the Irish names for her. She is *Myden dheelish*, the darling Virgin, the Banner of Peace, the Blossom of the Patriarchs, the Palace of Christ, the Ladder of Heaven. Her own name of Mary they hold so sacred that in the form of *Muire* it is reserved for her alone. At least one daughter in every family is baptized in her honor, *Maire*, but none save sinless Mary is called *Muire*.

The month of May in Ireland witnesses such

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an outburst of fervent devotion to Mary that she seems almost to be walking visibly among her children, and on Christmas Eve every Irish door stands open by way of welcome to her who on this night found so many doors closed against her in Bethlehem.

But if other evidence of the strength of their devotion were wanting there is always the Irish love for purity, Mary's virtue, as manifested in the multitude of chaste wives, of consecrated virgins, and the cohorts of her sworn Knights, the priests of Irish blood, the glory of the Church of her Son.

Spain's national shrine at Saragossa has already been referred to. Blessed Peter Canisius regarded the sanctuary of Mary among the lofty rugged peaks of Montserrat in Catalonia as foremost in the world for the number of its pilgrims and the sanctity prevailing there. Extravagant legends cloud the story of its origin. It is probable that the miraculous image of Mary enshrined there and said to have been discovered in one of the mountain's caves, had been hidden from the fury of the Moors, then devastating the country. The shrine is in the custody of the Benedictine monks. When Spain was at the height of its

glory the wealth of this sanctuary was incalculable. An inscription on a marble tablet commemorates the fact that in the year 1522 St. Ignatius Loyola kept a night's vigil of arms before Our Lady of Montserrat and there consecrated his life to the service of her Son.

The little town of Guadalupe, near Calatrava, venerates a statue of the Blessed Virgin sent by Pope Gregory the Great to St. Leander, and by him hidden with other treasures from the Moorish invaders. It remained concealed for six centuries, when its hiding place was revealed to a shepherdess by an apparition of Our Lady. It was first enshrined in a little chapel but later a magnificent church was built. However, the renown of this sanctuary has been overshadowed by another of the same name in Mexico, three miles northeast of Mexico City, the story of whose origin is both astounding and beautiful.

On Saturday, December 9, 1531, Mary appeared to an Indian convert, Juan Diego, as he was on his way to Mass and commissioned him to have the bishop build a church on the place where she stood. The bishop did not at once accept Juan Diego's story and bade him, if he should see the Lady again, to ask her for a sign. Twice more

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she appeared to Juan to receive the bishop's answer and when the Indian had occasion to go again to the city he went round by another way to evade her, only to be met once more by the gracious Mother. This time he asked a sign and was told to gather roses from the rock into his cloak and carry them carefully to the bishop. He obeyed, although it was the winter season, and when he came before the bishop and opened his cloak, all those present fell upon their knees, for a life-size picture of Mary as she had appeared to Juan Diego shone from the coarse garment. This is the picture now venerated in a magnificent shrine and visited by such numbers of the faithful that a town has grown up on what was once a barren hillside.

The Benedictine abbey of Einsiedeln in Switzerland possesses a miraculous statue of Mary which the hermit, St. Meinrad, set up for veneration in the seventh century on the slopes of Mount Etzel. Eberhard, another hermit, built a chapel about it and founded the monastery of which he became first abbot. The chapel now stands encased in sculptured marble in the vast abbey church. The pilgrimages have continued without interruption from the time of St. Mein-

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rad. In normal times from 150,000 to 200,000 pilgrims come annually to Einsiedeln.

A daughter house of Einsiedeln has been founded at Maria Stein, near Basle, where in an underground chapel an ancient statue of Mary attracts many pilgrims.

The little town of Mariazell in Austria has been for centuries the centre of an annual pilgrimage, the day for which was formerly appointed by royal edict. Nearly every ruler of the Hapsburg line come here to do honor to Mary.

The shrine of Our Lady of Consolation at Luxemburg in Holland was built by the Jesuits in 1624. The foundation stones were all inscribed with the name of Mary. Many miraculous cures have taken place there, especially in 1640, in which year the chapel was finished, but perhaps the greatest miracle of all is the extraordinary growth in the vicinity of devotion to Mary. A pious woman who made the pilgrimage to Luxemburg brought back to her home in Kevelaer, Bavaria, a picture of Our Lady of Consolation. The miraculous occurrences which ensued led to its being enshrined, and it is now the centre of a renowned pilgrimage in the custody of the Oratorians.

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The national shrine of Poland at Czenstochowa possesses a picture of Mary said to have been painted in her lifetime by St. Luke.

The chief shrines of Our Lady in North America are Notre Dame de Bon Secours at Montreal, Our Lady of Lourdes at Notre Dame University, Indiana, Our Lady of Martyrs at Auriesville, and Our Lady of Mercy at Hoboken, New Jersey. The shrine in Montreal is in the church of the Sisters of Notre Dame, first built in 1675. The beautifully sculptured wooden statue there revered was stolen in 1831, but replaced by Bishop Bourget in 1847 and the pilgrimage revived.

The town of Notre Dame, Indiana, with the pilgrimage shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, grew out of the foundation in 1842, in what was then a wilderness, of the university of Notre Dame du Lac, by Rev. Edward Sorin, subsequently superior general of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. Besides the university buildings Notre Dame contains the mother house of the Congregation and also that of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, St. Mary's of the Immaculate Conception.

Our Lady of Martyrs marks the spot where Father Isaac Jogues, the Jesuit missionary, and his companions, Gouipil and Lalande, were mar-

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tyred by the Mohawk Indians. The site was purchased in 1844 by Rev. Joseph Loyzance, S. J., then pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Troy, N. Y., who, on August 15th of that year, led the first band of pilgrims to the shrine he had erected under the patronage of Our Lady of Martyrs.

The Church of Our Lady of Mercy in Hoboken, in charge of the Passionist Fathers, contains as an altar piece a copy of the Rimini Madonna of Mercy.

There was formerly an ancient shrine known as that of Our Lady of the Milk (*Nuestra Señora de la Leche*), at St. Augustine, Florida. The shrine owed its name to the statue, brought originally from Spain, which represented the Blessed Virgin with her Divine Child at her breast. The devotion of the people and officers of the garrison to Mary's maternity led to the erection of a chapel, which was sacked several times by invaders from Georgia and Carolina, and the original statue has long since disappeared. The chapel was the scene of the martyrdom by Indians of Father Rodriguez, a Franciscan, who was murdered in his vestments as he finished his mass. The chapel which Bishop Verot built on the ruins of the shrine was destroyed by a wind

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storm. The present bishop of St. Augustine, Rt. Rev. Michael Curley, has had built on the old foundations a stone chapel capable of withstanding wind and storm.

The sanctuary of Our Lady of Chiquinquirá, in Colombia, South America, although of ancient origin, links this record of Mary's shrines with the present day in the solemn canonical coronation of the picture which took place there in July, 1919. The picture was originally painted on a coarse cotton blanket by Alonso de Narvaez at the order of Antonio de Santa Mara, a distinguished citizen of Chiquinquirá, who wished to place it in the little chapel of Our Lady which he had erected in front of his house. It was long an object of veneration to both Spaniards and Indians, but in time the canvas was greatly damaged and the colors became so faded that the chaplain declared his unwillingness to say Mass before it, and it was accordingly discarded.

At Señor de Santa Mara's death his brother came to Chiquinquirá, bringing with him his wife, Maria de Ramos, a devout lover of Mary. She was greatly distressed to find the discarded picture lying covered with dust in a corner of the chapel. She set it up against the wall and offered

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her daily devotions before it, beseeching Mary very fervently not to conceal herself thus from the eyes of her children. One day she left the chapel after a longer visit than usual, but scarcely had she done so when an Indian woman and her little son passed the open door, and the child cried out to his mother to look within, for God's Mother was standing there.

The household was summoned to behold the image surrounded by light and resting upright upon the floor. As the light faded it became evident that the colors of the painting had been restored, a fact attested by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities. The people of Chiquinquirá erected a larger chapel to receive the miraculous picture, to which many pilgrimages have been made and before which many graces have been obtained.

The solemn canonical crowning granted in 1910, on petition of the Dominican custodians of the shrine, was appointed by the provincial council of 1916 to take place during the Marian Congress of 1919. The ceremonies commenced on June 28th, when Mary began her triumphal progress from Chiquinquirá to Bogotá. The official escort was composed of military cadets in dress

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uniform and the President of the Republic walked in the procession. The crown, fashioned of the jewels of the women of Colombia and placed on Mary's brow by Bishop Maldonado, is valued at \$11,000.

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OUR LADY'S TITLES

In seeking Mary's patronage Catholics have appealed to her by a multitude of titles expressive at once of her greatness, power and compassion and of their love and confidence. Perhaps the most frequently used is her lovely name of Mary, with its countless variations and adaptations, such as Maryhelp, Marymount, Maryville, Villa Maria. Next comes the title *Our Lady* with its French form *Notre Dame*, joined to a phrase recalling some special aspect of Marian devotion. In the United States many churches are given the name of one of the famous European shrines, such as Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady of Good Counsel, Our Lady of Perpetual Help. The Poles group themselves under her patronage as Our Lady of Czenstochowa; the Lithuanians, as Our Lady of Vilna; the Maronites, as Our Lady of Lebanon; the Italians, as Our Lady of Pompeii or Mount Carmel; the Spaniards, as Our Lady of the Pillar; the Mexicans, Our Lady of Guadalupe, etc.

Her sufferings are compassionated under the

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names Our Lady of Sorrows, Maria Addolorata, the Seven Dolors, and her tenderness appealed to in the invocations, Our Lady of Refuge, of Pity, of Consolation, of Solace, of Prompt Succor, of Mercy, of Grace, of Hope.

Sometimes it is her nearness to her Son that is honored, as when she is called Our Lady of the Sacred Heart or of the Blessed Sacrament; sometimes it is her pre-eminence as "the first born before all creatures," and then she is hailed as Queen of Heaven, *Regina Cœli*, Queen of Angels, Queen of All Saints, Queen of Apostles.

Under the title "Star of the Sea," she is venerated as the patroness of sailors, and invoked for safety and prosperity at sea. Seaside dwellers call upon her as *Notre Dame du Bon Port*, *Notre Dame du Bon Voyage*. The beautiful title "Our Lady of the Lake," is another aspect of the tendency to invoke her protection upon a particular locality, as is also Our Lady of the Fields, Our Lady of the Mountain, St. Mary's of the Mount, Marymount, Mount St. Mary's, Maryknoll, St. Mary's of the Woods.

It is scarcely necessary to mention all the churches, shrines, chapels and convents which commemorate some mystery or event of her life,

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such as her Immaculate Conception, the Annunciation, her Maternity, her Purification, her Assumption, or some form of devotion to her, as the Holy Rosary, the Sacred Heart of Mary, the Most Pure Heart of Mary. They are all evidences of the vitality of the Catholic faith, to which the events of nineteen centuries ago are the realities of today.

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CONFRATERNITIES OF MARY

Two elements of life in the Middle Ages contributed to the development of the present day confraternities of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the religious orders and the trade guilds. At an early date it became customary for lay persons living in the world to associate themselves with the great religious orders, keeping a modified form of their rule and wearing their distinctive habit, either constantly or at least during religious services. By degrees, instead of the entire habit, its most distinctive feature, the long scapular hanging from the shoulders, was adopted. This finally was greatly reduced in size, so that at present scapulars consist of two pieces of cloth (two and three-quarter inches long by two inches wide), connected by two strings which pass over the shoulders and allow the scapulars to hang down in front and behind.

Not all the scapular confraternities are under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but the best known and most widespread of them is the Confraternity of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

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(brown scapular), which existed as early as 1280. The tradition concerning its origin relates that the Blessed Virgin appeared to St. Simon Stock, Superior General of the Carmelite Order, at Cambridge, England, on July 16, 1251, and offered him the scapular as the badge of her confraternity and a sign of grace for all its wearers, with the pledge that none wearing it at the hour of death should perish eternally. This privilege, which is called the first privilege of the Carmelite scapular, amounts to saying that all those who have been invested by the Church with this scapular and wear it in a spirit of faith shall enjoy Mary's special protection during life and may have confidence that she will secure for them such graces as are necessary to make a good end.

The second privilege of the Carmelite scapular is called the Sabbatine privilege. It is based on a so-called Bull of Pope John XXII in which he says that the Blessed Virgin appeared to him and recommended to him in a special manner the Carmelite Order and all those associated with it, promising that in addition to the indulgences granted to them she would liberate them from Purgatory on the Saturday after their death. The conditions laid down for the obtaining of this

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privilege include a number of good works in Mary's honor. Hence, although the Bull referred to be not genuine, it is permissible to believe that Mary will obtain the early release from Purgatory of those who wear her scapular and perform the other conditions.

Besides the Carmelite scapular the other scapulars of the Blessed Virgin are the black scapular of the Seven Dolors, in association with the Servite Order; the blue scapular of the Immaculate Conception, associated with the Theatine nuns; the black and red scapular of Mary Help of the Sick, allied with the Clerks Regular of St. Camillus; the white scapular of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, originated by the congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the white scapular of the Mother of Good Counsel, bearing the miraculous image of Genezzano, and under the direction of the Augustinians.

Ecclesiastical rules require that persons wearing scapulars be invested with them by a duly authorized priest. Since 1910 it is permitted to wear a single medal, known as a scapular medal, instead of one or several of the small scapulars.

The medieval guilds were associations of persons having the same calling or craft and, in an

age when religion permeated every phase of human life, they were naturally to a great extent religious in character. As a member of a guild a man learned and worked at the trade by which he earned his living, and joined with the other members in social intercourse, the performance of specified good works and religious exercises. They were especially characterized by their devotion to Mary, and their evening service known as the *Salve*, as well as their observance of Saturday in her honor, have already been referred to.

When the guilds were suppressed at the Reformation it was largely because of these religious features, but this aspect of them was soon revived in the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This Sodality was founded in 1563 by the Jesuit, Father John Leunis, a Belgian. The members were recruited from among the students at the Roman College, who took Mary for the patroness and sought her help in their effort to lead a devout life. By 1569 the sodality had grown so large that it was necessary to divide it into a Primary and a Secondary Sodality, the meetings of the first being held in the Church of the Annunciation, which is therefore the headquarters of the sodality.

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From Rome the association spread not only over Europe but to Canada, China and Turkey, always under the direction of Jesuit Fathers, and numbering among its members countless young men who attained to eminent sanctity and, indeed, many who are now canonized saints.

At the suppression of the Jesuits the sodalities languished and generally perished, with the exception of the Primary Sodality at Rome. Father Delpuits, a former Jesuit, revived the sodality in France in 1801, and since 1825, when the membership in the primary sodality was offered to all the faithful, including women, its growth has been constant and rapid.

The first congregation of Children of Mary was founded in Paris at the Convent of the Sacred Heart by the foundress of the Order, Blessed Madeleine Sophie Barat about 1818. Its members were the most devout of the older girls. In 1832 Mother Thuillier, a religious of the convent at Lyons, formed an association of former pupils of the house, to which other women were subsequently admitted. Father Druilhet, S. J., compiled the rules, which are still the guide of the Children of Mary of the Sacred Heart. The medal, first struck in 1824, bears on one side the

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Sacred Heart and the words *Cor meum jungatur vobis*, and on the other the figure of the Blessed Virgin.

The Confraternity of Children of Mary Immaculate was established in 1847 in schools of the Sisters of Charity and adopted as its badge what is known as the miraculous medal. This was first struck in 1832 according to the description of Sister Catherine Labouré, a member of the Paris community, to whom the Blessed Virgin appeared three times in 1830. She appeared as if standing on a globe with rays of light streaming from her hands, symbolizing graces to be bestowed on those who asked for them, while about her was an oval frame bearing the words: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." The feast of Mary's manifestation under the title of the miraculous medal was instituted by Pope Leo XIII and assigned to November 27.

OUR LADY IN ART

For many centuries the faith and love of the Christian world found its expression in pictorial representations. Before the invention of printing the scarcity of books put learning beyond the reach of the majority of the people; but learning was not needed to understand the pictures which they saw constantly before their eyes on the walls and windows of churches and monasteries, and carved from stone in their niches. And the greater part of the artistic treasures that the world now possesses would be lost to it if Mary were taken away.

The earliest representation of her is a fresco on the wall of the catacomb of Priscilla, originally crude and now partly obliterated, but already in its general features the type that was to prevail throughout the ages,—a woman seated, with her Child clinging to her breast. Some authorities consider that Mary is represented in the other catacomb figures of a woman standing alone with arms outstretched in prayer.

When the Christians emerged from the cata-

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combs and were free to depict religious subjects publicly, a number of pictures of Mary appeared which were said to be authentic portraits and ascribed to St. Luke. This, however, was impossible as human portraiture was forbidden by the Mosaic Law.

They followed a stiff, conventional type, the prevalent standard of the age and, authentic or not, they were intended to represent Mary. Accordingly they were held in great veneration, being honored in costly shrines, placed upon the masts of ships, carried into the battlefield and borne home in triumph by victorious armies.

After Mary's vindication at the Council of Ephesus the artists directed all their efforts to depicting her in triumph and glory, portraying her enthroned, attired in royal raiment and surrounded by a court of honor. This type was repeated with few modifications in the mosaics which began about this time to be the chief artistic medium, and continued through the decline of art in general. With the introduction of miniature painting art revived, but as yet the representations of Mary had nothing of the human tenderness that characterizes the true Madonna. This, the Italian term of respectful

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address to a woman, has through the custom of centuries become consecrate to Mary in art. Strictly speaking it refers to the Mother and Child, but it has come to be applied to every representation of Mary, whether alone or with other figures, at every stage of her life, in every aspect of her character.

The devotion to the Passion which characterized the Catholic centuries found its artistic expression in depicting Mary as the Mother of Sorrows. All that the artists possessed of human tenderness went into these tragic groups in which Mary, in sevenfold fulfillment of Simeon's prophecy, contemplates the lifeless, tortured Body of her Son, either hanging upon the Cross or lying in her lap. Such a representation of her is called a *Pietà*, from the Italian word for pity or compassion.

A tender Mother, she smiles from a thousand canvases, either holding her Divine Child in her arms or kneeling in adoration of His Divinity. Even in the ineffably beautiful Annunciation pictures the startled maiden is invested with the dignity of her mystical motherhood. This is especially evident in the lovely "Mater Admirabilis," painted on a wall of the Convent of the

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Sacred Heart at Rome, which depicts Mary in her girlhood in the Temple.

The faith of the medieval artists loved to depict her in circumstances familiar to themselves, in the sumptuous attire of a noble Italian or Spanish lady, resplendent in silks and embroidery, and adorned with gold and jewels. This was partly through a desire thus to lavish upon her the treasures of the world and partly by way of symbolizing the hidden beauties of this elect daughter of the King.

No artist felt that he had accomplished anything until he had painted a Madonna and many of them painted nothing else. Mary, the Mother of Christ, is the Queen of Christian art, from the crude drawings on the walls of the catacombs down through the charming groups of Giotto, the founder of Italian art, and the heavenly Fra Angelico, the St. John of painting, to that climax of all art, Raphael's Sistine Madonna, in which the artist has succeeded in putting upon canvas that commingling of heaven and earth which took place in Mary.

*May the Virgin Mary with her loving Child
bless us. Amen.*

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